



The Existential-Humanist

Journal of the Existential-Humanistic Institute



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

BY NADER SHABAHANGI, PH.D.

On the weekend of November 14th and 15th, the Existential-Humanistic Institute (EHI) and the California Institute for Integral Studies (CIIS) held the centennial anniversary of James F. T. Bugental at the Mission Street campus of CIIS in San Francisco. The many students of our dear mentor and friend Jim, as he was lovingly called by many of us, came from different places from across the country, some as far as from Moscow, to celebrate his life. In a moving opening to the two day conference, some twenty of us spoke very briefly about how Jim touched our lives, how his amazing skills and personality made them quickly a devotee, a student of his work. Roger Walsh, a former mainstream bio-psychiatrist, spoke at length in a separate presentation how working with Jim as a therapist and then later as a colleague changed his life to one that included the acknowledgement of the subjective and of the mysterious dimensions of being human. This, perhaps, is one of the most profound legacies Jim has left many of his students and clients: the deep appreciation of the unfathomability of the human being, the awesomeness of who we are in this world. Paraphrasing Jim, a psychology that does not stand in awe of the human being is not worthy of being called a psychology. The breadth of the conference presentation in honor of Jim's life and work would have made him proud. From Bryan Wittine's presentation on The Dark Night of the Soul, Bob Edelstein's The Art of Jim's Psychotherapy, Louis Hoffman and Michael Moat's Poetic Expressions in the Shadows, Pat LeClair's Poetry Readings, Elena Mazur and John Ingle's Twenty-Five Years of EH Therapy in Russia, Orah Krug's Existential Meaning Making, John Prendergast's Subtle Somatic Qualities of Presence, Kirk Schneider's Presence and the Polarized Mind, Louis Dangles and Chris Armstrong's Working with Couple's Core Wounds, Ken Bradford's Beyond the Search of Authenticity, Bruce McBeath and Paul Bracke's Increasing Client's Presence and Commitment in the Living Moment, Tom Greening's The Poetics of Psychotherapy, Steven Schmitz's Jim Bugental as Shaman, Suzan Bollich's Radical Intersubjectivity, Joan Monheit's Evoking Presence in the Face of Loss, Cheryl Krauter's Being Present with Life Threatening Illness, William Staudenmaier's Resilience and Depth in Existential Therapy, to Bruce McBeath's and yours truly presentation on Re-visioning the Meaning and Purpose of Aging - the range and depth of topics was simply astounding.

There was also a young professionals panel with Ray Greenleaf moderating Grace Fisher, Justin McGahan, Lacy Martinez, Sarah Sheretz, Andrea Columbu, Jen Gomoll and Troy Piwowarski. This panel covered a wide range of topics beginning existential therapists face from the business aspects of making a living to 'outing' that one works as an existentialist, a marginal, little known orientation. Another panel, this time on the other spectrum of the beginning professionals, was made up of a group of very seasoned therapists, who discussed or searched amongst themselves in front of the audience how it is that presence is revealed in their therapeutic work. This group, all women, was comprised of Molly Sterling, Sue Brown, Marty Lawlor, Patricia LeClair, and Joan Monheit. Their presentation showed the true art of psychotherapy that revealed itself in the way these therapists so openly showed their own process, how they doubted and questioned themselves, how they so much cared for their clients, were so deeply connected to them.

Indeed, Jim Bugental was omnipresent at the conference, a true mentor and teacher. His legacy lives on through us all. ●

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EHI 9TH Annual Conference
November 12th, 2016
Saturday 10:00am - 5:00pm

See page 10 for more details!

In Honor of Jim, Revisiting the Power of Presence Conference

BY JEN GOMOLL DAUGHERTY, LPC

November 14 and 15 were two windy days in November spent honoring and celebrating the life and work of Jim Bugental. The Power of Presence Conference presented by EHI and CIIS was co-sponsored by Existential-Humanistic NorthWest (EHNW). As the EHNW liaison to the conference steering committee I had been involved in the planning for over a year—and I dare say, it was a success!

Day one was opened with story after story about Jim and the impact he continues to have, even on many of participants who didn't get a chance to meet or work with him.

My story of Jim begins by meeting him when he was Ken Bradford's guest for a class at JFKU during my graduate work. I had read his books and appreciated his wisdom; and, seeing him work with a classmate in an abbreviated session was like magic. His presence with the client was palpable. Later I had the good fortune to study with Jim more closely by way of Myrtle Heery's study case consultation group. For 18 months we meet we met at Jim's house each week. Age had the best of his memory by that time but it didn't decrease his sharp wit and deep presence. I'm sure Jim didn't know me from week to week. And yet, each time I was the one sitting in front of him I felt like I was all that he knew. That was his gift and the gift I strive to share with my clients. Sometimes during didactic bits of the group or during the content part of consultations Jim would doze off. But, no matter. When it came time to engage in the role play Jim's feedback was always spot-on and the details shared prior to role play didn't matter as Jim would focus on the immediate subjectivity, deepen the experience, and, remind us that everything is everything. I think of Jim as my first mentor and am so thankful for his introduction to my current and ongoing mentor, Bob Edelstein, in whom Jim is very much alive and evolving.

I traveled down to San Francisco for the conference from my home town of Portland, OR. In many ways the conference felt more like going home than visiting from another state. I loved hearing so many people sharing stories and teaching from Jim's teachings. So many memories came flooding back as I saw old friends, reconnected with my previous clinical supervisor, and heard so many Jimisms. For instance, Jim would tell us to not do his work, "don't try to be me; don't become a Bugentalian." For me, the most poignant reflection of this sentiment came from Paul Brake's

introduction of the concept of existential urgency—I love this! and look forward to hearing more about it as the theory deepens and is shared more broadly.

On each day were talks by people who had been in therapy with Jim. It was amazing to hear Bryan Whittine and Roger Walsh share their life changing experiences from the client's chair. During his talk, Roger who pointed out that Jim's life and work has reached out through the generations of therapists and

books and changed the lives of millions. I'm humbled to be a part of this living legend.

Thank you Jim. And yes, there is always more...

— Jen Gomoll Daugherty, LPC
EHNW board member and liaison to the EHI steering committee for the Power of Presence Conference •

Being Present and The Infamous Now

*I could put the present on a leash,
walk it around, garner it in a corner
or wrestle it down so it cannot escape,
so it can't run off before I am ready to let it go
I could plead, bargain and persuade time to stand still,
all in vain since all that effort would shift me into the inevitable future
time has its own mind, it races on,
I can't put time in chains, imprison it, harness it
the moment is now and the moment is fleeting,
it rushes out the door at its own pace
leaving only memory of what was and what could have been
I tell my client to focus on the present.....what a joke,
the present won't obey, it has one foot in the future before I even know it was here
what is the elusive now but a medley of what just happened
a few seconds ago and what will happen in a few seconds,
a tangled web,
The elusive Now is weaving a tapestry of all there can be in my consciousness
at any given time,
jumbled, unrelated, fragmented,*

*Being present in someone's presence
a beautiful thought
an impossible task*

~ Sonja Saltman, M.A., M.F.T.

Key Concepts and Historical Perspectives of Existential-Humanistic Therapy

BY ORAH KRUG, PH.D.

How shall we live? How are we living in this moment? What really matters to us? How can we pursue what really matters? These are the existential questions typically explored in Existential-Humanistic therapy.

Existential-Humanistic (E-H) therapy is a relational and experiential therapy, which focuses on clients' lived experiences. It assumes that if protective patterns are softened or dissolved, more joy, satisfaction, meaning and purpose will emerge. E-H therapists create a therapeutic relationship in which clients can experience the protective patterns that are constricting their living. Consciousness, responsibility and choice take root in this process. The goal is to help clients reclaim disowned parts of self. This type of change is not focused primarily on symptom removal, although symptoms typically dissolve. Rather, this type of change is in the core of one's being; it is "whole-bodied" and transformative.

As Lao Tzu suggests, awareness of our existence requires an inward courage to face life—not avoid it.

Existential-Humanistic therapy came into being in the early 1960's in the United States with the publication of Rollo May's edited book *Existence* (1958). *Existence* (1958) arrived at a time when humanistic psychology, founded by Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers was gaining popularity by challenging the more prevalent therapeutic approaches of behaviorism and psychoanalysis. The book's themes expanded the focus of American humanistic psychology. It introduced into the "sunny" humanistic landscape, flush with possibilities and potentialities, more "cloudy" existential concerns, such as death, limited freedom, and uncertainty.

Perhaps, even more significant was the authors' challenge to an accepted "way of knowing." They introduced a radical epistemology for understanding human beings,



drawn from existential philosophers such as Kierkegaard, Husserl and Heidegger. This phenomenological epistemology valued knowing the person directly as opposed to projecting onto the person abstract models of human behavior, be they behavioral or psychoanalytic.

Thus, existential-humanistic therapy developed as an amalgam of American and European perspectives, uniting existential accents on limited freedom with humanistic accents on potentiality. Added to this mix was a radical method of understanding human beings, not through a lens of abstract theories but through a direct encounter with the person's experiential world.

Consequently E-H therapy emphasizes: (a) an experiential way of knowing oneself and others (b) freedom to become within one's given limitations (c) experiential reflection on one's personal meanings about becoming and (d) responsibility to respond to what one becomes.

Current Developments:

The current leaders of the existential-humanistic perspective owe a great debt to their mentors. Rollo May, James Bugental and Maurice Friedman mentored Kirk Schneider. Jim Bugental also mentored me for 20 years and I continue to attend Irvin Yalom's monthly consult group that is "20 years and counting."

One of Kirk Schneider's major contributions is an elaboration on a constrictive/expansive continuum of conscious and subconscious personality functioning. His work echoes that of Nietzsche, Kierkegaard, Tillich, and May as it emphasizes the paradoxical nature of human functioning. For Schneider, it is the interplay among constrictive and expansive capacities that constitute personal and interpersonal richness and health. Kirk also has introduced the concept of "awe" into the existential landscape most persuasively.

As a result of my long associations with both James Bugental and Irvin Yalom, I was

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moved to integrate the primarily intrapsychic focus of James Bugental with the interpersonal focus of Irvin Yalom. By doing so, I highlighted the value of integrating existential-humanistic presence: to focus not only on subjective process but also on interpersonal process. In addition, my interest in existential meaning making has brought new attention to the influence of personal context on perception and contact.

In 1997, Kirk Schneider and myself, along with our colleagues Nader Shabahangi and Sonja Saltman founded the Existential-Humanistic Institute in San Francisco, CA. Inspired by our mentor, James Bugental, and with his support, we envisioned EHI primarily as a teaching institute with a mission to educate the next generation of therapists interested in practicing from an existential-humanistic perspective. We offer participants certification and training programs that include 4-day experiential residencies; online courses and live and video consult groups. One program is in partnership with Saybrook University. This August, at the APA convention, EHI will receive the Charlotte Buhler Award for outstanding achievement for developing humanistic therapeutic education and training.

The current leaders of E-H therapy have also encouraged its evolution as an integrative methodology. With the advent of “existential-integrative” (EI) therapy, Schneider and May developed one way to utilize a variety of therapeutic modalities within an overarching existential or experiential context. In our textbook, *Existential-Humanistic Therapy*, 2010, Kirk and I expanded on this new perspective. We suggested that E-H therapy could serve as an effective foundation for many therapeutic perspectives, by offering a phenomenological method of entering the experiential world of the person. As a result, today’s E-H therapy has become for many an increasingly integrative therapy by being a bridge to both mainstream and existentially oriented therapies.

Key Concepts:

1. Human beings make meaning from experiences in the external world to create their personal worlds.

Individuals do more than simply perceive and experience reality; they in fact participate in constituting their realities by making meanings of their perceptions and experiences as they relate to the external world.

This is a core concept across all existential, humanistic and experiential therapies. Within this definition of existence lies: a) agency: we are centered in our being and create meanings about our world and our

elves, b) freedom: we choose how we define our perceptions and experiences, and c) responsibility: we are responsible for the choices we make, and d) change: we have agency to create new meanings about our world and our selves.

2. The process of meaning making results in the creation of self and world constructs (our personal world and sense of self).

The meanings made from lived experiences create a set of self and world constructs that allow individuals to understand their nature and their experiential (personal) world. These self and world constructs are not constituted as dry abstractions but as embodied memories richly laden with emotions and opinions about self and others. These constructs are both protective and constrictive—Jim Bugental likened them to wearing spacesuits in outer space—they allow us survive and function, but they don’t let us scratch our noses! Self and world constructs are the foundation of our personal context that varies, influenced by the cultural, historical and cosmological experiences of each individual.

3. Personal Context Influences Perception and Contact

An individual’s context acts as a “lens” from which one sees and makes sense of one’s world and oneself. One person, for example, may see himself as loveable and perceive his world as kind and accepting, whereas another may see herself as unworthy and perceive her world as judgmental and critical. The present, external world is continually

influencing the individual’s context—simultaneously one’s context is continually influencing one’s perceptions and experiences of the external world, meaning that, perception and experience are always contextualized. As Bonnie Raitt, the philosophical singer-songwriter suggests, “no matter if our glasses are on or off, we see the world we make.”

4. Our past is alive in the present moment

Our self and world constructs manifest concretely as ways of being in the world, in vocal tones, affect, body postures, language, dreams, and relational behavior patterns. We do not construct meanings as dry abstractions but rather as embodied memories richly laden with emotions and opinions about self and others. These constructs are often “actual” but out of awareness.

Application: The phenomenological method or the cultivation of presence is a way to enter the person’s experiential world.

To help clients, E-H therapists must truly know them, which means they must find ways to enter into and exist in their clients’ experiential worlds—not merely project onto them some theoretical notions of human functioning. How do they do this?

The phenomenological method is used to enter the experiential worlds and grasp the feelings and attitudes clients have made about themselves and others. The phenomenological method simply means to “brush away” pre-suppositions, and with empathic presence and curiosity, know clients directly. (Of course, we can never completely brush away presuppositions—we are always embedded in our context).

Implied in this method is the intention that every client is treated as an individual and not as a diagnosis or classification. Presence and curiosity cannot be cultivated when abstract models of human behavior or clinical diagnoses are projected onto clients.

E-H therapists carefully attune to the personal and interpersonal process more than to the content of the “story.” A focus on process refers to a focus on the clients’ attitudes and ways of relating to themselves and to others. E-H therapists work in the here and now, assuming that the therapeutic relationship is a microcosm of the client’s personal and relational world. Therefore they appropriately reflect back personal and relational ways of being that are evident but unnoticed. They attune to what is most alive in this moment, as I did with the shredded tissue. They take note of self-critical or indecisive behavior. How does the client relate

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Existential-humanistic therapy developed as an amalgam of American and European perspectives, uniting existential accents on limited freedom with humanistic accents on potentiality

to the therapist—in an engaged, open manner or in a detached, aloof manner? How does the client occupy personal space—with confidence and ease or with hesitation and constraint?

Why do E-H therapists focus their attention in this way? Because they assume that not only are their clients before them, but so are their lives: their wish to live and their awareness of death, their yearnings for connection and their fear of rejection, their desire for change and their fear of the unknown. E-H therapists know they don't have to go on a treasure hunt to understand the client's past—it's right in front of them! If therapists bring a full and genuine presence to the encounter they can empathically enter their clients' experiential worlds and know them as they are and the meanings they have made about themselves, others and their world.

Healing and change happens as protective patterns are experienced and enacted. Clients begin to have the capacity to reflect on their ways of being instead of being caught in them: "Oh there I go, "making do" again." They allow themselves to feel the pain of the wound, no longer numbed by the protective pattern: "I've never felt worthy of being cared for—I'm damaged." Meanings made about self and world, and the associated hurt and pain are felt and worked through, at an embodied, not cognitive level, in the safety of the therapeutic relationship.

Awareness, responsibility and choice now become a part of the exploratory, reiterative process: "Oh, there I go again, "just making do! Is that what I want to keep doing? Maybe not." Jim Bugental likened a person's protective pattern to a mask on one's face, slowly coming into greater focus as it is pulled away. The process of healing and change is by no means linear, nor is it primarily cognitive. The deepest roots of trauma cannot be talked about or explained away; they must be discovered, felt, and lived through.

Change is evidenced when new meanings about self are made, e.g. "I can lean on others because I am worthy and loveable." These new meanings about self typically result in the construction of more functional, satisfying and meaningful patterns of living and relating to others.

E-H therapists attend to three dimensions of experience and process: a) the personal or subjective dimensions of both client and therapist, (i.e., a focus on "self"), b) the interpersonal or relational dimensions, (i.e., a focus on the "in-between" field of client and therapist), and c) the ontological or cosmological dimensions, (i.e., and existential focus on "the world"). Being present to all three dimensions of experience and process are crucial—all three dimensions are "actual" in the present moment, and provide entry into the feelings and world of the client. •

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(Note: This paper was originally presented at the World Congress for Existential Therapy, London, 2015)

Congratulations to Orah Krug, PhD and Kirk Schneider, PhD on New Book Supervision Essentials for Existential-Humanistic Therapy

TO ORDER THE BOOK VISIT THE APA WEBSITE:
www.apa.org/pubs/books/4317423.aspx

EHI would like to congratulate Dr.'s Orah Krug and Kirk Schneider on the publication of their new book *Supervision Essentials for Existential-Humanistic Therapy*.

This concise guide applies the principles of existential-humanistic (E-H) therapy to the practice of clinical supervision. With the skillful use of case examples—including transcripts and analyses of real sessions with a real clinical trainee—the authors utilize the key ingredients of the E-H therapeutic approach, including empathy, acceptance, and genuineness, to model how trainees can

create safe, collaborative, and supportive relationships with clients. E-H supervisors help trainees learn to enter their clients' self-constructed worlds, using their own personal contexts to develop responsiveness to clients, while also cultivating the "presence" that enables genuine encounters and real therapeutic change.

This book is part of the American Psychological Association Clinical Supervision Essentials Series, the central resource for understanding contemporary models of psychotherapy supervision.

Recommendations for Supervision Essentials for Existential-Humanistic Therapy:

"This book is a clear, concise, and comprehensive guide to the art of clinical supervision. It skillfully teaches beginning supervisors the essentials of cultivating curiosity and empathy, examining interpersonal process, and respecting the uniqueness of each client. I recommend it highly."

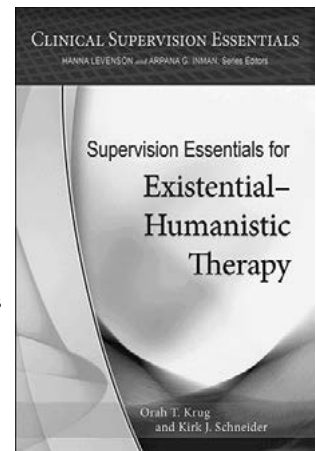
— Irvin Yalom, Professor Emeritus of Psychiatry, Stanford University, Stanford, CA

"Krug and Schneider, as leaders in the existential-humanistic therapy movement, offer an essential read in *Supervision Essentials for Existential-Humanistic Therapy*. They aptly demonstrate the supervision process in existential-humanistic therapy through showing its uniqueness from other approaches and illustrating how it is rooted in the existential-humanistic tradition. This book is sure to help advance existential-humanistic therapy through deepening the training and supervision process."

— Louis Hoffman, PhD, Department of Humanistic and Clinical Psychology, Saybrook University; Author, *Existential Psychology East-West*

Companion DVD: Existential-Humanistic Psychotherapy Supervision with Kirk Schneider, Ph.D.

For information about the companion DVD for this book, please visit APA webpage for *Existential-Humanistic Psychotherapy Supervision with Kirk Schneider, PhD*: <http://www.apa.org/pubs/videos/4310953.aspx>



The Chief Problem is Not Mental Illness but The Polarized Mind

(or The Social Catastrophe That Gets Repeatedly Overlooked)

BY KIRK SCHNEIDER, PH.D.



“It is not that man is ‘evil,’ but he is not neutral either. He is terribly afraid of his own death, and of the insignificance of his life, his ‘creatureliness.’ And so, his whole life is a protest that he ‘is somebody,’ and this protest he takes out on others: he will even kill to show that he can triumph over death.”

— Ernest Becker
(undated letter to a colleague)

There is a reason that many of the most twisted and destructive people on this planet are not seen as “mental patients.” They tend to be ordinary or even celebrated individuals—and their brains are as “normal” as the rest of us. Does this not tell us something glaring about the inadequacy of our current diagnostic system, as well as the culture out of which it arises? We have no language for the malady that both supersedes and in many cases fuels the diagnostic categories we conventionally term psychiatric illnesses, and our reduction of them to brain abnormalities almost entirely blinds us to their deeper cause. This cause is overridingly environmental and the product not of sickness but of unaddressed, unacknowledged fear—which leads individuals—as well as societies—to become rigid, narrow, and destructive.

Time for a Broader Perspective

In the spirit of Laing, Foucault, and Szasz, it is time to revisit the terms “mental illness” and “mental disorder.” While mental illness implies the presence of detectable tissue pathology and mental disorder implies a discrete deviation from normal functioning as defined by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of the American Psychiatric Association (DSM), neither concept holds up well under close scrutiny. Mental illness, for

example, is rarely corroborated by the clear presence of tissue pathology, and when it is, it tends to be dispositional rather than determinative. The second category, mental disorder, is conventionally confined to those who are 1) socially isolated; 2) professionally referred; or 3) socially powerless. The problem, however, is that the category is much broader than is generally conceived. There are legions of people who fit many aspects of what is conventionally termed mentally disordered and they are never considered as such either by authorities or by the authority-adhering public. Consider, for example, the relevance of the following set of traits, drawn from the DSM, to many of the world’s most notorious political leaders, business and religious leaders and everyday bullies, bigots, and nationalists. (Let’s not forget that 72 short years ago eight out of the fifteen leaders assembled at the ill-famed Wansee conference in Nazi Germany, which instigated the “Final Solution,” were doctors!). Consider how problematic it is to restrict diagnoses to a relatively small and powerless constituency of mental patients (the so-called mentally ill) while forgetting that the most egregious possessors of such qualities often reside casually next door, or worse, in the most lavish chambers of national capitols.

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The traits to which I refer are first, the diagnostic criteria for psychopathic personality.

These include:

- 1 A callous unconcern for the feelings of others
- 2 The incapacity to maintain enduring relationships
- 3 The reckless disregard for the safety of others
- 4 Deceitfulness: the repeated lying and conning others for profit
- 5 The incapacity to experience guilt and
- 6 The failure to conform to social norms with respect to lawful behaviors

I would also add the diagnostic criteria for narcissistic personality, which include:

- 1 A grandiose sense of self importance
- 2 A preoccupation with fantasies of unlimited success or power
- 3 A sense of entitlement, a lack of empathy, and an unwillingness to recognize the needs of others and finally,
- 4 Arrogance

Now it is abundantly clear—or should be—that these above “disorders” are major disturbances of humanity and not merely the pathologies of marginalized groups. They are also major disturbances of personal and cultural conditioning and not merely the byproducts of defective brains or genes.

It is in this context then that I advocate for a radical overhaul in our conception of mental disorder. I advocate for a terminology that can capture the breadth of the problem we conventionally attribute to the marginalized and disenfranchised. This terminology is the polarized mind. The polarized mind is the fixation on one point of view to the utter exclu-

sion of competing points of view, and it is the perennial plague of humanity. Over and over again, generation after generation the major cultures of the world seem to produce the polarized mind and it is almost always hidden in plain sight, until disaster strikes. How does the polarized mind arise? As terror management theory has so adroitly shown, the polarized mind is frequently a byproduct of fear—and fear has its roots in the terror of death. In the absence of intervention, people will do all they can to avoid this terror, including becoming inflated and terrifying themselves as a result. Right now, polarized minds appear to be at work at mass shootings in public institutions (as in military bases and schools), suicide bombings (as in Iraq and Afghanistan), and vigilante killings (as in the Travon Martin case). But polarized minds are also in evidence in the corporate manipulations of Congress, the willful contaminations of the environment, the hateful media punditry, and the surveillance state.

In short, if we are to address the problem of mental disturbance in our communities, and indeed world, we must address the cultures and upbringings that give rise to such disturbance, and we must dig for resources far beyond that of the medical or psychological clinic.

A Public Works Program for Depth Psychology

It is in this light that I propose what I call the equivalence of a Public Works Program for Depth Psychology. We could begin this program with pilot studies of longer term, relational psychotherapy programs for troubled youth. Such studies could help us understand the fuller and longer term impact of depth psychotherapy for youth, their families, and communities. Second, we could develop

pilot programs to assess the impact of arts and humanities and emotional intelligence curricula in public schools. These kinds of studies would help us to understand how and whether the advice of wisdom traditions, both contemporary and classic, can have a therapeutic effect on developing children. Finally, we could implement a pilot study of confidential, psychologically facilitated encounters between heads of state or leaders of government. These encounters could be fashioned to emulate the approaches we have used quite successfully in couples counseling and conflict resolution groups. Such encounters help ostensibly adversarial individuals or small groups to understand each other as persons rather than as simplistic stereotypes, and to gradually, as the understanding grows, appreciate points of commonality. Such commonality is the basis for consensus, and consensus under such circumstances, the basis for a more just and stable world. Pilot studies of this kind would give us a chance to see if what we observe in the consulting room and the occasional intercultural exchange, can work at the highest levels of decision-making.

These anti-polarization measures may not be easy to implement, and they wouldn't take place overnight, but they are certainly doable. Furthermore, if we don't recognize that conventional psychiatric approaches—and terminology—are insufficient to the task of understanding those who rule and often threaten our world we will remain in jeopardy. •

Kirk Schneider, Ph.D. is a psychologist and author of “The Polarized Mind: Why It's Killing Us and What We Can Do About It”.

EHI and Dr. Nader Shabahangi to Receive APA Award

The Existential-Humanistic Institute (EHI) and Dr. Nader Shabahangi is honored to be the recipient of APA's DIV 32 2016 Charlotte and Karl Bühler Award. This award is given to an institution, and an individual associated with an institution that has made an outstanding and lasting contribution to humanistic psychology.

Dr. Shabahangi will accept the award at the 124th annual convention of the American Psychological Association in Denver, Colorado, August 4-7th, 2016.

Conference Overview:

The annual convention of the American Psychological Association is the largest gathering

of psychologists and psychology students in the world. The convention each year attracts 11,000 to 14,000 or more attendees from all areas of specialization in psychology and from research, practice, education and policy. Attendance at most of the sessions is covered in your registration fee. (There are extra charges for APA Continuing Education Workshops and for obtaining CE credits by attending CE sessions.) You will be able to attend any open session and can often ask questions of presenters, who not infrequently are world-renowned experts in their respective fields. You will also be able to connect with some of the world's finest talent in your particular area of interest in psychology. •



For more information about the conference visit www.apa.org/convention/

10 | Lessons Learned DAYS | in Barcelona

BY NADER SHABAHANGI, PH.D.

The application of many existential-humanistic principles can be found within processwork, founded by Arnold Mindell. Processwork, also called Process Oriented Psychology (POP), specifically addresses conflicts on many fronts, from personal relationship conflicts to ethnic, religious, socio-economic, tribal, national and cultural conflicts. Processwork emphasizes following people's process. One of Jim Bugental's early work, published in the 1970's, was entitled *Psychotherapy and Process* where he defines human beings – and being itself – as process. This fundamental idea brought me to processwork and to learn how it applies its methodology to the challenges we face in this world, as individuals and as a collective. It was also what made me take the journey to Barcelona.

Ten days, Barcelona. What a beautiful spot on earth—openhearted people, warm air, a relaxed feel, astonishing sights. And ten days of learning at the Deep Democracy Institute intensive called: *Power, Love, War and Miracles*. It is a learning to be with process, a learning to see what is in front of me and to slow down and be truly present with that. Ten days with a hundred people from some thirty nations who have come to learn about and engage with diversity. Perhaps most personally, ten days to experience how I am used to seeing the world from my own point of view, and to understand this view more closely. And yes, to experience you, the other, and how you look at the world.

Barcelona. Plaza Cataluña. Demonstrations for Catalan independence. The next day, a counter-protest by a pro-Spanish group. The police protection is heavy. Yet as I look closer behind the masks of armed and armored police, the human warmth is very palpable: I imagine they'd rather have a *copa de vino* with you than stand there with a pistol and bullet-proof vest. That is just my perception, I know; but again, I am attached to seeing what I want to see—warmth, beauty, loving concern.

Our first days are to be in idyllic Sitges, a former fishing town a short bus ride from Barcelona. The very first meeting brings us together, and quickly the anxiety of encountering “the other” seems to subside somewhat. Strong coffee and ample snacks of watermelon surround the meeting area, offering a sometimes welcome distraction. After group introductions we break into dyads, later triads. The aim is to connect us.

Day 1. We are learning about conflict, learning that rather than avoid it we can consider going into it further, unpacking it and understanding it. What is conflict, after all, but something new meeting something old? Something I am used to, familiar with, meets a different way. Most often I look at the new with skeptic's eyes, wondering what it wants, why it is disturbing me. It throws me off like the strong coffee they serve at the hotel, which I need to

water down—a lot. Or the late-night dinner-times in Barcelona, when a cautionary voice in my head tells me it is not good to eat so late. Don't the barcelonenses know that?

Day 2. *Jet lag.* I'm not at my best. All of which brings me face to face with “disturbance.” My initial tendency when I'm feeling disturbed or irritated is to look for a cause outside of myself. Who or what is disturbing me? And why? I am settling in, minding my own business, content just to be, and there you are, asking me if I could move my chair. I acquiesce with a friendly smile, but inside a big dialogue starts: Why did you ask me to move? So many chairs are available, and I had just settled into my comfortable spot—didn't you see that?

The storyline continues now to include historical evidence of how certain people seem to be insensitive to others. When I was a kid, my grade-school teacher always had me move from the back of the class to the front so he

could see me better. What an embarrassment that was in front of all the other kids. But as I go further down memory lane, I become aware that I'm getting deeper and deeper into my irritation. I'm the one creating this disturbance, not the person asking me ever so politely to move. The disturber is me, not him; within, not without.

Day 3. *On the third and last day at Sitges,* I receive an email that an old team member in our company has left for another job. I am surprised. How could she do that? I keep thinking about the reasons why she might have left. As I go through the day, I suddenly remember that only yesterday evening I too had talked to a friend about leaving the company myself. I had been so taken by the calm and beauty of Sitges that I began to imagine a life by the sea, away from the demands of business.

So leaving is in the air. The motive for leaving is something I have considered not only in San Francisco; it is also right here in Sitges. It is within me. When I realize this, my thoughts about the team member having left the company change as well. I see that we are actually more connected than I thought. What's more, this news from afar has affected my reality. The existence of a “nonlocal reality,” a reality that is not limited to local causality, gives me pause to think about a world where all is interconnected, even our thoughts.

The taxi arrives at 6 p.m. to take us to the Sitges train station. From there we catch a train to Barcelona city center. Our hotel is a fifteen-minute walk from the Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona, or CCCB, where we will be meeting in the morning. It is almost nine o'clock by the time we get to the hotel. The city is warm. Taking a stroll around the neighborhood of the hotel, we discover that most restaurants are just beginning to open, with only a few people, mostly tourists, sitting down for dinner. We return to the first restaurant that flirted with us: *Bosque Palermo*. Ordering *paella* for two, we are delighted by the way

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it is served. And it is delicious. Benvinguts a Barcelona.

Day 4. A group of over a hundred people convene on the top floor of CCCB, with its beautiful views of Barcelona. But my focus quickly moves from the view to a more contemplative outlook. I am struggling with the idea that I, the person I thought I knew somewhat, am not as much a person as a role. The role I find myself in now, on this warm day in Barcelona, is that of a student, of someone wanting to learn with a group of people in a classroom. I can see how I have slipped into the role: I have a pen and paper in my hand and find myself in a playful mood, joking and kidding with my fellow students, sometimes sinking into a rumination about something that is said, while trying to make links with what I know.

During the morning coffee break the classmate to my right turns to me and asks me about my work in the States. I notice how I shift into the role of a person who works inside an organization and is now thinking of the human and business complexities he faces there. In talking about the company I also notice how I shift into a more serious mood, sit more upright, less relaxed, than the student I have just been.

Not identifying as much as a person but more as a role makes me aware how difficult it is to speak of having an identity that is independent of the situation I find myself in, independent of the people around me. If I do not have a fixed identity, I am as much you in front of me. The “me” depends as much on you, and on what role you—the person I am facing—have, as on my own so-called inner self. As a matter of fact, the idea that I am a “self” is replaced with the idea that I inhabit a temporary role, which changes according to my circumstances and context.

Day 5. The walk to CCCB this morning is pleasant. I especially notice old and very old people walking with grocery baskets, some empty and some full, amid the young and fast-paced crowds, people who are probably trying to get to work or someplace else on time. While I am passing by many old and beautiful buildings, the concept of being a role rather than a fixed identity keeps circulating in my head.

On this fifth day, before the morning exercise, I have a glimpse of what it must mean to “burn one’s wood.” This expression refers to dealing with one’s own personal history, which so often influences how we live in and react to the world around us. One participant has walked right into the middle of the group and starts to talk about his need for clarity; he is upset because he feels there is a lack of structure. I notice how I am becoming increasingly irritated by his demeanor and demanding attitude, which takes up more and more group time. I notice an urge to shout at him.



Then I stop for a moment and become curious: what is making me so irritated, even angry? What is being triggered in me as this man speaks about his need, as he takes time to express himself? I then remember how I had to fight Hans, the bully in my sixth-grade class; how he seemed always so full of himself, and at the expense of so many others in the class. It did not feel fair, especially to those of us who were smart but had a quieter way of talking, who were more reflective and slow in the way we spoke. We continually had to fight to be heard, had to deal with Hans’s insensitivity and callousness. When I remember Hans and my situation in middle school so long ago, I am able to feel more connected to what is happening now. Rather than feeling irritated, I open up to this man’s point of view. I am able, to however small an extent, to burn a little of my wood left from those days of being bullied. After all, Hans taught me to fight back, speak up, sometimes even scream—all ways of being I have been able to use quite frequently and successfully in my life. Thank you, Hans.

Day 6. Las Ramblas is a fantastic street to stroll on, especially on a warm evening—and all of our evenings in Barcelona have been warm. When we are eating our mandatory paella in an outdoor restaurant, on Las Ramblas, the world feels in harmony and order. None of the people streaming by seem in a rush. All walks of life—singles, couples, families, even a few stragglers—are passing by in a relaxed fashion as we enjoy our signature Barcelonan dish. It feels good to take some time to be contemplative and have a change of scenery.

This mood follows me into day six of the workshop and to the morning’s exercise, which has us work on our organization, the spirit, and ourselves. In helping my dyad partner through the exercise, I notice how at one point I get caught in being directive rather than following his process. Though my intention is to be helpful, I have become controlling, and my partner lets me know exactly that: he feels he is being told what to do.

At first I am stunned and want to protest. Of all the possible behavioral traits, I certainly do not feel I have the need or wish to control. Yet my partner confronts me with just that observation. I need to look at myself and want to understand that part of me that seems to want to control. Indeed, when I then begin my inner work, I notice a tendency in me to enjoy control, one that likes feeling right and being in charge.

Though seeing this is painful at first, once I allow myself to accept the controlling part of me, I can let go of it. In acknowledging the perceptions and feelings of my partner, I can more fully “see” my different parts. I learn that there is always at least a little truth to what the other sees in me. In being inquisitive about what pains me in the perception of the other, I become more accepting of the many parts of myself, of my own inner diversity.

Day 7. Today I begin to feel that we are entering the last days of the workshop. I notice that I feel a bit sad about having to say good-bye to so many friends, both old and newly made. I find myself looking around to see whom I can still have lunch with, or a cup of tea. I also survey my memory, reviewing what I have learned in these last days. What sticks with me is the importance of an attitude of curiosity, of allowing oneself to explore, to discover. At the core of cultivating this attitude is a question rarely asked when we encounter something that bothers us or someone who irks us: What is welcome here? Asking this puts us at once into a different position. Rather than rejecting the situation outright, we say hello to it: How are you? What can I do for you? What would you like me to know?

Barcelona is a perfect place to practice saying Hola to the unknown, to potential or real trouble. The loving and accepting ambiente of this city and people makes it easier than it might be in other places to stay open and curious to the unfamiliar, the new.

Day 8. For whatever reason or reasons, today is difficult. It might be the intense group process, which leaves me pondering the inevitability of the end of the workshop; or the slightly overcast weather in the morning; or last night’s dream: this day simply feels difficult.

When I check in with myself, take a moment to be still, I hear a small, hopeless voice, which challenges the work I am doing to become more aware and cultivate a different approach or attitude to life and conflict. What difference can I make in a world that has so many problems wherever one looks?

During the break, fueled with strong Catalan coffee, I meet a fellow student who without any prompting starts to relate some words he

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The Existential-Humanistic Institute Presents:



'ALWAYS GOING HOME': Human Evolution and Digital Revolution



EHI 9TH Annual Conference
November 12th, 2016
Saturday 10:00am - 5:00pm

LOCATION

AgeSong University
350 University Street
San Francisco, CA 94102

**Exploring the Intersection of
the Digital Age and the E-H
Therapeutic Perspective**

COST

Professionals: \$100 | Students: \$50

Existential Therapists Explore Concerns of the Modern World

The German poet Novalis, when asked where he thinks the human being is going, answered that 'we are always going home'. Artists and thinkers from many different cultures have expressed similarly that in our seeking a 'home' we are searching for a place where we belong. This search relates to our need to feel connected, both in terms of relationships to other people and in terms of a need to contribute to our humanity.

As existential thinkers and therapists we ask ourselves how the digital revolution helps and hinders our need to find 'home'. Is the digital revolution contributing to our human evolution to be more at home in this world or does it prevent us from being truly in relationship with others, from experiencing a sense of awe and wonder? Do we feel there are more opportunities to connect through the many digital means afforded us today?

On this day of our gathering, we will try to explore and find answers to these questions and more. Our hope is to understand more deeply for what we humans long as we are 'on our way home'.

For conference registration visit www.ehinstitute.org/conference

Questions regarding the upcoming conference?

Contact Dr. Mary Madrigal at 2016conf@ehinstitute.org

www.ehinstitute.org/conference.html

has heard from our teacher: If we do our own work, we work for the world as well. Every time we work on a relationship, or try to understand it better, the effort extends hope and support beyond the relationship. Our personal work affects the world as much as the world affects us as individuals. And since we live in a world of nonlocal phenomena, the boundaries of our personal work extend to the larger world beyond our sight.

As I finish my last sips of coffee I feel lighter, as if the burden of hopelessness has lifted. Knowing that my own small work here at the workshop and at home somehow makes a difference restores me to a sense of promise and possibility.

Day 9. On our last full day together there is a definite sense of closing and departure in the air. Many of us who have not been able to facilitate a group process now seek any chance to do so. Some of us, looking forward to the evening's dinner and dance party, are exchanging tips on the best way to get to that special locale, not far from the Barcelona harbor.

Our group process deals with the topic of "Me and We." Participating on the outer perimeter of the group and observing the many roles present in the group, I become aware how difficult it is for me to take the basic role of Me, the role which represents that I am important, that I count. I then remember our teacher telling us that whenever a role is difficult to represent, it shows up as a "ghost" role, in the air, so to speak. I imagine if I expressed the ghost role in an exaggerated way, it would say, "I am all important, I am the one around whom the world turns." And while I repeat this to myself, I am surprised to notice that there is a truth in that role, and that such a position is important as well, especially if one is standing up for a belief, a cause, or a new idea. In thus inhabiting the ghost role of Me, I watch my initial discomfort turn into a discovery of the importance of the ghost role. This gives me new confidence to bring that latent role, often so difficult to express, into the room.

Day 10. Many of us enjoyed the party last night, our last night in Barcelona. After much wine and food we danced for a long time until

being gently reminded of the closing time. Some of us were sad in anticipation of the final good-bye; others felt relieved that a quite intense time of learning and growing had come to an end.

Today I fall into a reflective mood, trying to summarize for myself my learning and experience of the last ten days. The refrain in my head is persistent: "You are in me, and I am in you." The distance from me to the other, the one outside of me, has become less and less. And not just my distance to other people: in a local bookstore I see a book on the world of trees, how they communicate with each other, alert each other to danger, and help each other when in need. I am attracted to this secret life of trees and filled with new curiosity. "You are in me, and I am in you" extends not only to my fellow humans but also to all that exist on our planet. In the final hours of the Barcelonan DDI Intensive, this sense of interconnectedness comes home to me. •

A Tribute to Jim Bugental

Honor Awards Ceremony at the APA Convention, August 2011

BY ORAH T. KRUG, PH.D.

(Note: At the APA Convention in August 2011, I was asked to accept, in tandem with Kirk Schneider, the Lifetime Achievement Award—awarded posthumously to my teacher and friend Jim Bugental. I began it with a poem):

If his penetrating gaze, twinkling eyes and inviting presence, ever captured you, then you knew Jim Bugental.

If you ever laughed at his lame limericks or puzzled at his word games, then you knew Jim Bugental.

If you ever chided him for his politically incorrect, risqué comments that he delivered to the very end, then you knew Jim Bugental.

If you ever marveled at his exquisite sensitivity to the subjective realm, to his ability to illuminate what was actual but unregarded in the living moment, then you knew Jim Bugental.

If you ever groaned at the sound of his whistle signally the start of a long and challenging day of training, then you knew Jim Bugental.

If you ever heard him speak tenderly about Liz, his wife or Karen, his daughter, then you knew Jim Bugental.

If you ever acknowledged the tremendous impact he had on your life, then you knew Jim Bugental.

I'm very grateful for this opportunity to pay tribute to Jim, who for thirty years was my teacher, my mentor, and my friend.

Jim taught me to appreciate the value of following process over content, the power of

presence and the importance of developing a *pou sto*, (a place to stand) as a therapist.

He taught me that therapy, like life is not about gathering information—no indeed—therapy is actual, and subjectively lived moment to moment.

I learned these skills in a weekly consult group and had the opportunity to practice them at a yearly, five-day retreat in a beautiful part of northern California. He called these trainings, "The Art of the Psychotherapist." Some of my closest friendships where forged there. Twenty years later, eighteen of us still gather there to immerse ourselves in the work.

The mark of a great teacher is to inspire his students—to expand on his work and to make it their own. I think Jim would be very proud of us. We have made films, written books, taught courses and even created a teaching institute.

Sixteen years ago, with Jim as our consultant, Kirk Schneider, Nader Shabahangi, and I, with several other colleagues, created the Existential-Humanistic Institute. Its intention was to continue the community building that Jim began and to teach the E-H approach to the next generation of therapists.

One of our goals was to develop a certificate program in E-H therapy, and now our dream has been realized. This fall, EHI is launching two certificate programs, one in partnership



ELIZABETH AND JIM BUGENTAL

with Saybrook University. We already have ten students; four are international, from Austria, Canada and Singapore.

Our certificate program is anchored in a principle dear to Jim's heart—that incidentally has been validated by recent research.

The principle is this:

It is the human dimension that is ultimately responsible for life-changing therapy. It is the person of the therapist and the therapeutic relationship that truly matter—not particular techniques or treatment modalities.

Jim wisely knew that—that is why he was one of the great masters of our time. •

EHI's newest educational offering: THE MODULAR TRAINING PROGRAM

EHI now offers a program for those primarily interested in joining the experiential training that we offer. Once formally accepted into the program, participants register to attend the two experientials, and may also opt to participate in video consultations with our faculty. The Modular Training Program is an opportunity for EHI to provide our experiential training to students who are not enrolled in a certificate program. Students may always opt into the certificate track if they so desire.

What are the EHI Experiential Residential Retreats?

The two mandatory 5-day, 4-night experiential residentials are the core of EHI's training. They allow participants who are graduate students in psychology or counseling and licensed pro-

fessionals to come together in a safe environment, get to know one another, and experience how E-H therapy is practiced up close and personally. Each of the two experiential residentials involves a combination of relationship-building, learning of theoretical foundations, and first-hand experiences wherein theory comes to life. At times, this may involve faculty members demonstrating their way of working with clients and inviting commentary; at other times, participants work in dyads with each other and receive direct feedback from a faculty member as they work. Through these various ways of learning, participants begin to drop into a deeper, more embodied sense of what E-H therapy has to offer. The experiential training also provides participants a way of

deeply understanding how work on themselves mirrors their ability to work with clients.

Experiential Dates for 2016/2017 Curriculum Year

- EXP I: Sunday, October 23rd, 2016 - Thursday, October 27th, 2016
- EXP II: Friday, March 24th, 2017 - Tuesday, Mar 28th, 2017

For more info about the EHI Modular Training Program or to apply please visit: <http://ehinstitute.org/apply.html>

Questions regarding the EHI Modular Training Program? Please contact Troy, EHI's Student Coordinator at info@ehinstitute.org •

About the Existential-Humanistic Institute

EHI provides a forum, a “home,” for those mental health professionals, scholars, and students who seek in-depth training in existential-humanistic philosophy, practice, and inquiry. EHI is for trainees who believe that in optimal psychotherapy, as Rollo May said, it is not this or that symptom, but “the life of the client” that is “at stake” – and that it is precisely this life that must be supported, accompanied, and encountered.

The goal of the institute – via both its curriculum and newsletters – is to support existentially and humanistically-informed psychologies and psychotherapies throughout the world. By “existentially informed,” we mean perspectives that stress freedom, experiential reflection, and responsibility. By “humanistically informed,” we mean purviews that address two over-arching questions – What does it mean to be fully, experientially human, and how does that understanding illuminate the vital or fulfilled life?

The Existential-Humanistic Institute (EHI) is a program of the Pacific Institute, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization.”

**EHI Board Members
Pacific Institute/EHI
624 Laguna Street
San Francisco, CA 94102**

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1. Entitlement to a one page professional bio and photograph on the EHI website www.ehinstitute.org.
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1. EHI student affiliates and regular affiliates will receive a 10% discount on all EHI events, including conferences and workshops.
2. Participation in the EHI listserv, which will afford you the opportunity to converse with EHI affiliates, some of whom have made substantial contributions to Existential-Humanistic psychology.
3. Participation with fellow professionals and students in vibrant local learning communities, as well as globally on the worldwide web.
4. Access to the EHI Newsletter, which includes articles by EHI faculty on the theory and practice of Existential-Humanistic psychology. In addition, the newsletter will keep you informed about upcoming programs, conferences and workshops at the institute and in the field.
5. The opportunity to submit articles to be considered for the EHI Newsletter.
6. The opportunity to become acquainted with some of the most accomplished psychologists and therapists on the North American continent. You can find out who is an affiliate of EHI by going to the website at: www.ehinstitute.org.
7. The opportunity to contribute to the advancement of Existential-Humanistic psychology and impact in the psychology field by engaging with members of other disciplines and orientations.
8. The opportunity to develop and maintain life-long friendships with people who share your interests and values.
9. The chance to become an integral part of a community that will foster existential-humanistic values throughout the world.

COST

Professional Affiliate Dues: \$100 | Student and Regular Affiliate Dues: \$50