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David D. Cicia

University of Massachusetts Amherst

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The Practice of Freedom:
Plato's Dialectic As A Practical Experiential Method
Of Radical Transformational Moral Education

A Dissertation Presented

by

David D. Cicia

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

September, 1987

School of Education



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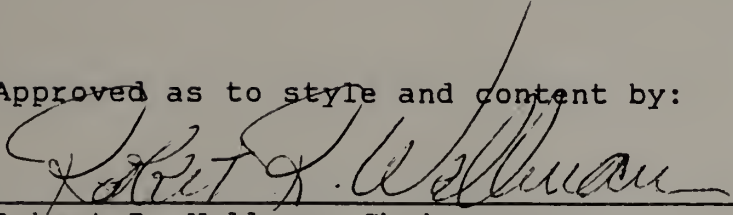
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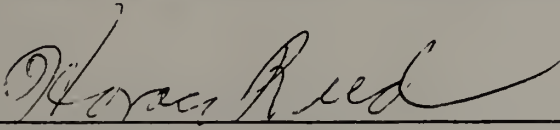
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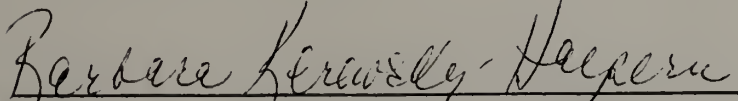
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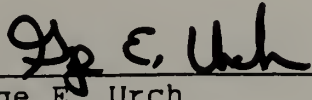
David D. Cicia

Approved as to style and content by:


Robert R. Wellman, Chairperson


Horace Reed, Member


Barbara Kerewsky-Halpern, Member


George E. Urch
Acting Dean, School of Education

PREFACE: WHY PLATO?

The sole purpose of this paper is to define and present a method that approximates as nearly as is practically possible, Plato's Dialectic, interpreted functionally and experientially toward this end. The work of definition, as in Plato's Dialogues, plays a fundamental and crucial role in the dialectical process, and does so here also. The first section (chapters I and II) is an attempt to prepare the way for even the possibility of a definition of Dialectic which would be operational, practical, experiential and in tune with Plato's most basic moral and spiritual aims. The rest of the paper attempts to present a fair approximation - what Plato called a "likely story" - to the actual process of dialectical inquiry as a practical discipline for here-and-now application. The whole movement within the paper is a sort of dialectical process of defining an idea. And, in the true dialectical sense, the idea does not readily form into a conclusive conceptual statement, but only emerges in the felt-experiential living through of the actual movement of the entire process, as a sort of gestalt of the whole.

Therefore, this paper can really be understood only by living through and actually participating in the movement of its arguments, experiencing and questions. By right, the form of presentation should be in the form of dialogues, as

in Plato. In that way the reader is more easily brought into the whole flow of the experiencing process. However, since this paper must take the format for a dissertation, there will be a necessary removal and distancing from the actual living experience that a true enactment of Dialectic would be. Please remember as you are reading this that what is being talked about is a living, feeling, experiencing process in real human beings in actual circumstances and predicaments. If you can in some way also enter into this feeling, experiencing process in your reading and pondering of this, the idea of Dialectic will more readily emerge for you.

For, as seen time and time again in Plato's Dialogues, ideas are elusive, not easily captured by the nets of pure reasoning. The only way to fully understand an idea is to incorporate it, to radically enter into a deep-feeling relationship with and in it until its form and light emerge in you as a living experience. This is the process that I attempt to define and present in this paper, and it is the process that can open up a fuller understanding of the paper. Since this is a paper on method - and a very elusive and subtle method - there is no merely conceptual or easy path to its understanding. It is meant to be lived, not just applied; entered into fully and lived through in a deep-feeling way. Dialectic, as I see it and try to present it here, is not a detached intellectual method for

investigating abstract statements or concepts (even moral concepts about human action and experience), but a highly refined and experientially sophisticated way of radically and thoroughly engaging in the actual process of living a life. It is a means for bringing one's life, actions, feelings, desires, aims and experiencing in general, into clear focus, for moral right action, and the embodiment through authentic expression of a sense of natural intelligence which makes for true human satisfaction and happiness. Only when the process of understanding is entered in such a thorough way can Dialectic be most fully understood, not in abstraction but by living it and living through it as the very process of life itself, made conscious in your own discerning experiential awareness and modes of aware action.

This is what the whole process of pursuing the idea of Dialectic has been for me. When I first read Plato's Dialogues extensively nearly twenty years ago I was touched by their existential, moral, intellectual and spiritual force. I was drawn into their dramatic action, not as an intellectual analyst, but as a participant in matters that had a real feeling base in me, and which at the same time challenged me to a play with universal meanings. I sensed in these moral/spiritual dramas a reality that went far beyond what is called Philosophy, an importance and intimacy greater than ordinary drama, and a depth that was much

deeper than conventional educational practices. It had elements of all these but was so much more sophisticated, in a very subtle and deep way, than any of them. I decided that I wanted to learn how to do this activity of Dialectic. I had no idea whatever at that time how I would learn this. I just sensed that something was there that was thoroughly and comprehensively inspiring to me.

I pursued this inspiration through the years, off and on, in various ways, always with the idea in mind that this Dialectic was and is an actual practice, and that it carries the excitement and upliftment of the highest kind of whole-feeling and intelligent life. There was something in it, tangible and elusive at the same time, that had the power to lead a human being to the highest range and fullest scope of life's possibilities, in areas and levels that most of us are not usually even dimly aware of. It would not be an easy path to follow, but one that to me had the definite ring of a deep, hidden and much needed truth to it. The Dialogues, as I read them, entered into them and was moved by them, embodied that sense of an essential, moral, existential truth that I felt was needed in order to live life as fully, rightfully and happily as is possible for a human. This truth seemed to be there, was indicated very directly in the words of the Dialogues, but where was it really? How could it be known? How to get to it and really live it? The truth most needed for human happiness seemed

to be there within easy reach, but at the same time almost completely elusive. In other words, I was inspired to action but didn't know what to do.

As I have come to understand, this perplexing situation is actually the form that Dialectic naturally and necessarily takes: the frustration of mental desire and curiosity, leading to a deeper, living experiential process in which what was desired emerges in and through you as you engage life, rather than as an object which you can hold onto and fix attention on as a steady possession. The pursuit of the intuitively obvious but practically elusive truth in Plato's Dialectic, led me into actual experiential processes which forced me to engage life rather than contemplate abstractions.

The functional learning disciplines presented in chapter III, are the results of my search through the processes of conscious experiencing, and my subsequent distillation of methods and perspectives from very many sources on this. These disciplines are not definitive or conclusive for dialectical practice. Dialectic is a universal process in the flow of life itself that is not exclusive, and also not to be defined by any single method or even by a summation or a synthesis of methods. The methods presented here merely serve as experiential ways into the dialectical process that I have found to be useful in moving toward and into a practical working approximation

to the living process that is Dialectic. They are useful, in this way, both as preparatory disciplines and as means for getting at a practical operating definition, for the dialectical process (remembering that, in Dialectic as a living process of engagement, no definition is definitive.)

I hope that my presentation of these disciplines will help you to at least conceive of ways of experientially approaching the living process of Dialectic and entering into its life in some way. The last section of the paper (chapter IV) goes into the forms and workings of a method of dialectical practice that is based on these disciplines but not determined by them. Dialectic is not these methods, but these methods help to bring us to a place where we can begin to conceive of an experiential dialectical practice. Dialectic goes well beyond any of these, and in truth, well beyond anything that can be written, even in such a sophisticated medium as the Platonic dialogue. The whole movement of this paper is meant to be at best, then, only a fair approximation to a practice that can, even by the finest poet-philosopher (Plato) only be suggested. It can truly be lived and found out only in the living of it, not as any final result or realization but as an ever ongoing inquiry which carries within it its own rewards.

The whole basis of this inquiry over the years, in development and now in the writing, has been to enter into and embody in various ways, the inspiration to live truth as

I first saw this in Plato's Dialogues. To enter into the process of inquiry into felt-experiential moral truth, through Dialectic, is to enter into a heart-felt, deep-feeling engagement in the finest qualities and the furthest ranges of the human spirit. The path of Dialectic, as shown by Plato, is or can be, an opening to life in its fullest possibilities. What Plato presents is a kind of invitation, and a series of models for the process (his Dialogues.) It is then up to us to hear that invitation, understand the models in a deep feeling way, awaken to the possibilities, and begin to live the life of radical inquiry that is the means for natural, spiritual and moral happiness. Plato is not the teacher and we the students of this process. He merely points the way for us. The process itself is the teacher, and we become that as we consciously engage in the life of experiential moral inquiry that is Dialectic.

It is my hope that this paper will serve as an introduction to the practical experiential investigation into the possibilities for a full life of natural moral happiness that Plato's Dialogues inspire, and that this will be only the first step in the development of a practice that may eventually more fully approximate the aims indicated by that great philosopher and spiritual teacher.

A Note on Language

Expository language cannot adequately convey the act of speaking/dialoguing that comes directly and authentically

from the kind of immediate bodily felt-experiencing that is the heart of the method being developed and presented here. Therefore some of the words and phrases that I use in this paper may seem peculiar. Especially to be noted in this regard is the use of "-ing" words such as experiencing, transforming, etc. These forms are used in an attempt to convey the action quality of the practice as an ongoing, ever-flowing process. In some instances I have taken the liberty to use words that are not in common usage, such as "imaging", "dialoguing" and "presencing", which bring out the action and movement of the process better than their noun equivalents.

I have capitalized certain words throughout the paper, such as Focusing, Releasing and Dialectic, when they refer to a specific practice or method rather than simply to an activity.

All Greek words in the text are transliterated and underlined for recognition. Some terms appear often, such as idea (pl. ideai), because of their central importance to the whole theme. The whole movement of the unfolding understanding of Dialectic gradually brings out definitions and understandings for these words, and they in turn stand as markers for the total vision. The section in chapter IV on "Platonic Terms" provides a summary and elucidation of these words based on the whole development of the dialectical practice.

In Plato's Dialogues there is repetition of themes, with each repetition going deeper into the inquiry and/or from another angle of approach. Repetition in this paper has a similar intent. Some themes need to be introduced early on but can only be truly understood later, after other themes have been developed and understood. Dialectic has no strictly linear progression but forms a whole pattern of interweaving actions and themes. Any attempt to bring forth its functioning as a practice will have to be true to that. Therefore some repetition will be necessary and inevitable. Please read the paper, then, as a total interaction of many parts and elements, each figuring into and modifying the others and in turn being modified itself in the process. No one part stands alone, in isolation, above or below any other part. They are all to be taken together, as in what Plato called a koinonia of ideai (a living, organic community of ideas.)

ABSTRACT

The Practice of Freedom:
Plato's Dialectic As A Practical Experiential Method
Of Radical Transformational Moral Education

September, 1987

David D. Cicia, B.A., St. John's College, Annapolis, Md.

Ed.D., University of Massachusetts

Directed by: Professor Robert R. Wellman

This paper presents a practical, experiential method of moral education based on Plato's Dialectic. First, pertinent historical, philosophical, social and educational contexts for Dialectic are reviewed. Next, a functional view of Plato's work is presented which makes possible the development of a primarily experiential dialectical practice. Various aspects and modes of experiential, functional body-mind learning disciplines which are both preparatory to the practice and formative of it, are then examined and illustrated. Then, the central action of Dialectic as a very specific kind of experiential functional method is elucidated. Finally, an introduction to the actual practice of Dialectic as a direct, experiential, moral discipline and art, is presented.

For the purposes of developing this practice, Plato's Dialectic, as illustrated and enacted in his Dialogues, is viewed as a subtle art and functional learning method for

radical self-inquiry and self-examination within the context and atmosphere of whole, deeply-felt love (eros), through engagement in unconditional relationship. Its aim as such a method is to bring about effective, total body-mind conditions for a deep felt-experiential transformational shift from personal strategies of self-involvement, pretense to knowledge, virtue and wisdom, and the fabrication of defensive illusions; to the awakening and enlivening of a process of natural whole-body intuitive knowing, loving and relatedness, with authentic expression and "true speech" (logos) arising from that. This takes place as an activity of "remembering" the already available and always arising conditions of all experiencing, rather than as an achievement or attainment, and it is a direct experiential intuition of prior existential wholeness, native happiness, moral wisdom, transcendental beauty and spontaneous creative intelligence. This paper seeks to operationally define an educational practice that is a fair approximation to this functional, experiential view of Plato's Dialectic.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE: WHY PLATO?	iv
ABSTRACT	xiii
Chapter	
I. INTRODUCTION: THE CONTEXT OF DIALECTIC	1
The Science of Consciousness: The Philosoph-	
ical Context	9
Human Culture, Economy and Community: The	
Social Context	18
II. EXPERIENTIAL FUNCTIONAL LEARNING	24
Introduction	24
The Dialectical Liberal Arts	28
Functional Learning	32
Physiological Experiencing	39
Storying	47
Intellectual Art	52
III. FUNCTIONAL LEARNING DISCIPLINES (Propaideia) . .	60
Use of the Self	63
Inner Game Learning	63
Repatterning	67

Felt-experiencing	75
Focusing	75
Subtle Energy Experiencing	84
Releasing	90
Presence	102
Vision	110
Visioning	110
Reframing	117
Eidetics	130
Questioning	139
The Option Process	139
Self-knowledge Inquiry	148

IV. DIALECTIC AS EXPERIENTIAL FUNCTIONAL METHOD

(Paideia)	156
Fundamental Experiential Choice	156
Moral Choice	158
The Art of Choosing	168
Platonic Terms	216
Socratic Method	231
Experiential Questioning	246
Conclusion: The Idea of Dialectic	270

NOTES	282
BIBLIOGRAPHY	292

C H A P T E R I

INTRODUCTION: THE CONTEXT OF DIALECTIC

This chapter will present the rationale and purpose of the paper and give a brief historical background of the tradition of dialectical philosophy and its use as a learning discipline.

The main concern of this paper is not to understand Plato or Socratic method but to use these as guidelines for developing a methodology of dialectical learning that is close to and meets criteria for classical Dialectic as practiced by Plato. This "new" methodology is not meant to be an interpretation of Plato's Dialectic but something entirely new, based on it but suitable to the present circumstances of individuals and societies. Therefore, we will be taking a departure from conventional interpretations of Plato and of dialectical philosophy and method. Given the circumstances of widespread misconception of Dialectic, this approach may be a way to get back beyond centuries of the history of philosophy to an approximation to a practical working understanding. Having gone through this departure into strange and new territory we can then check with Plato's formulations to see if there is a good fit. The whole process of this investigation, then, will itself be dialectical in nature, revisioning one line of inquiry in terms of other lines, coming to more adequate understandings

and insights through oppositions and comparisons, and reaching for no fixed positions or static conclusions but always concerned for the process itself. As such, the criteria for validity of the investigation are also dialectical, which means that they can only emerge within the process of the inquiry. The considerations are strictly methodological.

The Socratic method of dialectical inquiry, as exemplified in Plato's Dialogues [1], has been an object of lively interest for over two thousand years. The reason is that Plato's philosophy presented and set the stage for many if not most of the major issues that have guided Western philosophy, culture and science. His Dialogues might be considered to be the epitome of ancient Greek culture, which is the wellspring of traditions still with us. Dialectic is at the heart of the creative spirit in this two thousand year old tradition. So it is very understandable that its study, and possible recovery as a practical learning method, might still be important, and perhaps at a time of cultural crisis such as we are now living through, even crucial.

This paper is a continuation of this inquiry into and through Dialectic. It grows out my interest in the ancient and medieval liberal arts as methods of truly humanizing and liberating education, when properly used. Such interest received renewed practical attention in the nineteen-thirties in this country, when there was a revival of the

idea of classical liberal education. This took the form of the "great books" curriculum at St. John's College of Annapolis, Maryland, and at the University of Chicago. [2] These two experiments in renewing the traditional liberal arts have been linked together in popular understanding, but the underlying philosophies which guided them were radically different, as were the resulting educational practices.

The University of Chicago experiment was headed by Robert Hutchins and formed by Mortimer Adler, Richard McKeon and a few others. It took a decidedly Aristotelean and Thomistic direction. The St. John's program was masterminded by Scott Buchanan. It became Socratic and dialectical both in spirit and in form, meaning that there was no overriding commitment to a philosophy but an unrelenting determination to question all assumptions and all philosophical positions. Without going into the philosophical details of the controversy between the two schools, it is sufficient to say that the University tried to bring about a reform in higher education while the college embarked on a radical departure from any existing practice in higher education at that time.

My investigation stems from my experience of the program at St. John's and my questioning further into the sources and practices of liberal education. I have used the program of the college (which is a set four year curriculum) as a jumping-off place for the investigation because I know

it very well and because it is an outstanding example of a current educational attempt to embody the Socratic spirit of dialectical teaching and learning. While St. John's does utilize the "great books of the Western world" as a central element in its curriculum, it does so in a way which always puts these books and authors to the test of questioning intelligence. There is no authority at the school who has any claim to definitive knowledge in any sphere. (Teachers there are called tutors, not professors.)

Buchanan stayed with the college only ten years after the beginning of the new curriculum. He perceived that it was becoming set in its ways, whereas he had conceived it as being just a beginning of an ongoing investigation of what the liberal arts might be in modern conditions of living and how they might be effectively used in higher education. Most of the others at the school did not seem to have Buchanan's unrelenting spirit. The program has remained almost unchanged for nearly forty-five years.

Without being bound to Buchanan's forms and structures, I wanted to continue his inquiry into the dialectical nature of liberal education, and the practice of the liberal arts which prepare one for Dialectic. The purpose of the investigation was to inquire into the nature, purposes, conditions, methods and practices of liberal education, with a view toward re-visioning and refashioning the liberal arts. I wanted to see if the liberal arts could

again be made useful for the dialectical intent of moral transformation and liberation of the spirit and intelligence. The concept of liberal education would be expanded to bear directly on the practical conditions of living and experiencing, on the ways we act, and on how we use our abilities and potentials in guiding our lives. Liberal education would then be liberating education.

Needless to say, what I am calling liberal education and the liberal arts has little to do with what goes on at most liberal arts colleges. These are called liberal mainly out of tradition, and to distinguish them from technical schools and universities, where more practical studies can be pursued.

Going by the Socratic dialectical principle to follow the idea where it leads, I have gone into investigating fields of study that have not traditionally been linked with liberal education. In this I feel that I am following the intent and purpose of the liberal (as liberating) arts, and do not see that it would serve this purpose to adhere rigidly to old forms.

We might ask, then, at this point, what Dialectic is. Some definitions have been sophistical, while other approaches have come close to the Socratic spirit. Alfred North Whitehead said that the whole history of Philosophy has been merely a series of footnotes to Plato. This in itself testifies to the enduring quality of the basic

questions of Dialectic. Those who have taken the challenge of finding out what Dialectic is, from Aristotle (in his Topics), through the medieval scholastics, through Kant's transcendental dialectics (in his Critique of Pure Reason), to Hegel's great philosophical architecture of dialectical reasoning (in his Science of Logic, Phenomenology of the Spirit, Philosophy of History, etc.) and Marx's materialistic adaptation of it, to attempts to use a "Socratic method" for classroom teaching, have all worked within the framework, originally set out by Plato, of the constant interplay in human discourse, society and culture between a way of speaking which expresses truth (whatever that may be, which is itself subject to inquiry), and a way of speaking or thinking, called sophistry, which is delusional and deceiving. Whether anyone has answered the question about what Dialectic is does not matter so much as that there has been a tradition of inquiry into it, and this at least starts to bring Dialectic into view.

The conventional view of Dialectic has been as a means of argumentation and disputation. This stems from Aristotle's interpretation of it, and is what it in fact became in the Middle Ages, when scholasticism ruled the universities. Accordingly, John Stuart Mill called it "a contrivance for making difficulties of the question . . . present to the learner's consciousness . . . essentially a negative discussion of the great questions of philosophy and

life." [3] Descartes disdained it as not being of service in ascertaining the truth (according to the way he saw it.) Many critics have pointed to the endless wrangling that it has at times tended to engender.

Augustine, in his treatise On Christian Doctrine, points to just such wrangling but makes a very important distinction between the right use and the sophistical misuse of the dialectical art. According to him, the right use of Dialectic is as a method of inquiry that "deals with inferences, and definitions, and divisions" and "is of the greatest assistance in the discovery of meaning." [4] This viewpoint, that Dialectic is a valuable tool for the discovery of meaning, will be very important as we proceed with the investigation, and ask what meaning is in a functional and experiential sense.

This distinction between true and sophistical Dialectic originates in Plato's Dialogues, where Socrates is often found countering the opinions and activities of the Sophists of his day, who claim to be able to teach a person moral and civic virtue (or excellence) and the skills to prevail in just about anything. Socrates relentlessly questions their uses of speech and reasoning that lead to these claims.

Why does he do this? What aim is there in his continual turning of speech against itself in the form of questions about the Sophists' use of speech? What is the

Dialectic that Socrates talks about, and how does it differ from what the Sophists do? The implication is that there is a form of "true speech" (logos) and that Dialectic is the art of following a line of inquiry in search of it. But it is not at all apparent just what this art is. What, if anything, distinguishes, Socrates' Dialectic from the argumentation and disputation of the Sophists?

To begin answering these questions it is necessary to show the foundation upon which this study of Dialectic lies. This chapter will briefly present the context in which the practice may exist, and chapter III will introduce the learning disciplines that prepare the way for developing the dialectical practice. In this, and in the whole development of this paper, we will be trying to recapture the Socratic/Platonic tradition of Dialectic as a practical method and show its viability for use today. Plato never actually defines Dialectic in a clearcut practical way that is final and usable, but his Dialogues exemplify it when read in a way that is looking for functionality. As in the Dialogues, then, this functionality, or functioning, of Dialectic, will be our main concern.

The following two sections present, respectively, the philosophical and the social contexts that are constituting factors for a practice of Dialectic that would be at the heart of a truly liberating liberal arts education.

The Science of Consciousness: The Philosophical Context

Every theory and practice have presuppositions and principles which guide them and keep them as an integral and intelligible unity. [5] This is its metaphysics. The metaphysics, in the above sense, of the dialectical liberal arts might be considered to be the metaphysics of possibility. [6] Plato's Dialectic, and the tradition flowing from it, specifically investigates patterns of ideas which are visions of possibility that guide action and living. The discernment of what is possible is the structuring of experience which makes for its actualization. Dialectic investigates the specifically human possibilities of right and good living, looking into the patterns of ideas that govern the proper use of the self in acting, knowing and being.

What would be required to validate this experiential dialectical metaphysics of possibility is a direct, experiential way to investigate Consciousness itself and the possibilities that reside in it. A practical example of a functional experiential method for this is the Science of Creative Intelligence. [7][8] This is a science of Consciousness which provides both principles of investigating Consciousness and, through its methodology, the Transcendental Meditation program, practical means for carrying out such an investigation. This will be used as an

example because of its ready availability, the ease with which it is learned, the extent of the modern scientific research on it, and its rootedness in a highly revered ancient tradition (Vedic) of practical investigation into Consciousness (as Being) and its development.

A basic understanding of Transcendental Meditation would help us to understand this science. Transcendental Meditation (TM) is a natural form of deep meditation developed by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi from the ancient Indian tradition of Vedic knowledge of Consciousness. [9] It is a physiological process that takes place through mental action. You introduce a mantra, which is a meaningless sound that has special vibratory qualities, and let your attention go with that sound wherever it leads. By the natural tendency of the mind to seek greater degrees of happiness, the attention and the physiology of the nervous system are naturally drawn to quieter and quieter levels of the experiencing process, which are more pleasing and restful, until the awareness is found on the quietest level possible, which is a state of pure Consciousness with no thoughts, experiences or disturbances. This is an experience of the simplest state of awareness in which Consciousness is alone by itself, present to itself and known to itself, not as object or as separate subject but as self in itself (what Plato refers to as auto to auto.) This is the most fundamental level of experiencing and the most basic nature

of the experiencer. Having had this experience, the mind and physiology carry some of it with them back into the more active outer experiencing, until, by regular alternation of daily activity and meditation, the pure unobstructed Consciousness remains as a permanent aspect of even outward attention. The mind and nervous system become repatterned, as it were, by the repeated experience.

This process gives easy and verifiable access to Consciousness in its pure form (without contents) and to the creative impulses that arise from the quiet state found therein, as practical possibilities. Consciousness in its pure form, thus, is not an ideal which we merely use to support our reasoning about the deepening process in dialectical experiencing (which we will go into in chapter IV.) It is an actual state of experiencing available to any person who chooses to use the TM methodology, or any one like it. It has not been a common experience until the introduction of the TM program because of the almost exclusive outward-directed conditioning of our Western society and culture. But that does not mean that it is not real, nor does it mean that it requires great effort. The technique of transcending through finer and finer levels of awareness to the simplest, clearest, contentless form of awareness, is not at all difficult. Anyone who can think a thought (any thought) can practice TM, although TM is not a process of thinking but of merely allowing awareness to

follow an impulse of thought to its source, moved by the mind's natural attraction to the subtler and happier (blissful) levels of awareness found as pure Consciousness.

This method is an example of a true phenomenological reduction to the underlying determinants of experience. It brings verification that Consciousness is a field of unlimited possibilities, with the practical outcome of restructuring the individual's awareness in the experience of possibility. This experience is transforming. Viewing the world from a direct experience of the creative impulses that give rise to appearances is quite different from being totally absorbed in the multitude of outward forms. There is more of an ability to play in the world of appearances rather than struggling. The play that really brings this into actuality in a person's outward awareness and life, is Dialectic.

The Science of Creative Intelligence outlines definite, distinct steps toward ultimate human happiness, or enlightenment. The experience of transcendence, as described above, is the first step. Full enlightenment requires acting in the world on the basis of pure Consciousness and an experiential investigation into appearances to discern their true nature. Dialectic, in the practical experiential sense that we will be developing in this paper, is an instrument for this inquiry. It is the practice of subtle discrimination in the act of experiencing, going in an

active way (as deep meditation does in a receptive way) to finer and finer levels of that. It is this deep experiential inquiry that brings pure Consciousness as the wellspring of possibility to bear on the outward forms of appearances, perceptions, feelings, action and thoughts. Dialectic, in this view, is based on the process of transcending, within the experiential context of transcendental awareness, and is an instrument of bringing that field of possibility into actualization and manifest form. Its actions are at once both transcending and actualizing. Its play is in the realm of experiential possibility.

Jonathan Shear, in a paper on TM in relation to Plato [10], has called attention to the transcendental aspects of Plato's philosophy. Because of thousands of years of ignorance in regard to the nature of transcendence (pure Consciousness) as a possible and easily attainable experience, the references to transcendence in the Dialogues have either been overlooked or glossed over as another aspect of Plato's supposed idealism. With knowledge of transcendence as a real and easily repeatable experience it becomes possible to read the many passages in Plato which refer to transcendence, as having a real referent, i.e. the experience of transcendental Consciousness. The "vision of the Good, Truth and Beauty" in which the soul is born, for instance, is a real experience of the state of bliss (what

Plato calls eudaimonia) in the state of pure Consciousness, which itself has these transcendental attributes. The experience of pure awareness at the source of all experiencing, both for Plato's philosophy and for our investigation into the art of Dialectic, is the foundation and the guiding principle. All our investigations are researches into and in that Beingness (self in itself.)

In Shear's reading of Plato in relation to the real experience of transcendence, the Dialogues are seen to be examining just about every aspect of human life and endeavor and showing that none of these really and truly work without the foundations of transcendental experience. [11]

Everything that is not based on the transcendent (i.e. pure Consciousness) is undermined by questioning and arguments. It is seen that there is no stable basis for knowledge or action without the experience of transcendence. "If we do not have knowledge of the Good [transcendental Consciousness] we don't know what anything is good for."

[12]

Beyond this, in practical terms that relate directly to the practice we are developing here, the "forms" (eide) and ideas (ideai) which are central to the method of dialectical inquiry, are said to be found only in a realm of pure intelligibility. Does this mean that Plato is positing a region of pure ideal patterns existing in some supposed heavenly Mind, or some variant of the theory of innate ideas

that says that there are certain principles and structures that exist in themselves prior to experience and give form and structure to it? If we are to be true to the spirit of Dialectic as unremitting inquiry, we must neither create a doctrine out of Plato's talk about ideas (as in the "theory of ideas" falsely attributed to Plato), nor reject what is said about how and where ideas and forms are to be discovered. In a truly functional application of dialectical inquiry, the talk about ideas must lead us to explore how they may be discovered in our experiencing, not to arguing about whether or not they exist and where they might be. The real thrust of dialectical inquiry is experiential investigation. So, if we take Plato seriously we will be led to investigate where and how he investigates.

The "realm of pure intelligibility" is experientially verifiable in pure Consciousness through the process of transcending described above. It is that Consciousness itself. Plato's references to a divine realm where forms and ideas reside, are references to this. This is not an assertion of truth or fact but an hypothesis for investigation. Plato's investigations take place within the context of this hypothesis; there is at least much talk about the pure realm of ideas and forms. Our investigation into Dialectic, in following Plato, must at least take this seriously. With the knowledge of the possibility of transcendence as a real experience, the hypothesis becomes

one that is experiential and not just philosophical. If there is a realm of transcendence, and Dialectic plays and moves in some manner in relation to this, our development of a dialectical practice would do well to follow this track.

If we investigate into the "realm of ideas" through direct transcendental experiencing, we may be able to take Dialectic out of the framework of speculative idealistic philosophy. Such an investigation is in the true dialectical spirit. Shear points out that, with the knowledge derived from the direct experience of pure transcendental Consciousness and validated by the tradition of practical wisdom of the Science of Consciousness, the forms and ideas talked about by Plato are subject to direct verification in experience, as the finest impulses arising from the still field of the mind in its simplest, most quiet state. Dialectical practice, as will be seen later, takes the investigation of fine, subtle levels of consciousness further and opens up wholly new lines of inquiry in this. These two aspects of directly experiencing and investigating Consciousness give the possibility of putting all the references to transcendental Consciousness in the Dialogues where they belong - as instigators of further inquiry.

So, Plato's Dialectic exists and moves within the possibility of transcendence. Because of the intimate association of transcendence with the ideas (ideai) and forms (eide) and with the ideas of the good, of truth and of

beauty - which are so basic to the spirit of Plato's inquiry - it may be taken, hypothetically, as a constituting factor for the very possibility of Dialectic; and the experiential investigation of this dimension may be seen as essential and crucial to the functional, operational defining of Dialectic that is the task of this paper. If transcendence is a fundamental constituting factor for Dialectic, and an experiential phenomenological reduction to pure transcendental Consciousness is possible, as we have seen that it is, then an investigation of an active, functional mode of transcendental phenomenological reduction may prove to be a basic line of inquiry into the actual operations of Dialectic.

As will be shown later in the paper, finer and finer discernment within the act of direct felt experiencing is what makes for the functional dialectical inquiry into ideai. This itself is a functional experiential form of phenomenological reduction to the basic constituents of all experiencing. Its activity exists in the context of experiential transcendence. This specific type of inquiry into ideai will be shown to be the heart of dialectical action. So, both the positing of transcendence as a guiding possibility and its actual investigation through direct experiential cognition, are fundamental factors in the discovery of the necessary conditions in which Dialectic as a practice can come into being.

Human Culture, Economy and Community: The Social Context

The fuller idea and practice of liberal education that I am suggesting was called paideia in classical Greece. Paideia is not adequately translated as education, although the activity of paideia is educative. The idea is broader than what we have come to conceive of as education or schooling. It is the total living action of the community as it bears on the formation of its members. It is not culture, but culturing in the active, functional sense. Every part of the community and every activity in it were thought of as culturing the lives of the people who participated. Within the general culture of the community were the higher forms of culture which served to shape the life of the community toward the highest good, justice and harmony. Perhaps the most prominent of these higher forms that had this specific aim was drama, which worked the materials of psyche and polis into stories which held up before the people "the grave and constant in human affairs." (Aristotle) The highest and most subtle form of this was the deep philosophical drama fashioned out of human experiencing by Plato, which he called Dialectic. This activity was the essence and the heart of paideia, perhaps not for every member of the community but for those who had the training and the fortune to participate in it. Dialectic best expressed the highest purpose of paideia; it

was its epitome and purest form. [13]

The liberal education I am envisioning has to do with the meaning and purpose which paideia represents, and it is best expressed by the activity of Dialectic, in the kind of functional practical way we are developing it in this paper. It follows that the investigation into the sources of the liberal arts and liberal education must take seriously the broad, functional idea of culture as paideia, and the specific activity of Dialectic as it works in the action of culture (as culturing.) What I am looking for, then, cannot be merely a philosophy or a methodology of education, but must be an understanding of the possibility of dialectical action in the living culture as a whole, in actual circumstances of community and people's living together in community.

Another one of the formulators of paideia, Xenophon, in his Oeconomicus [14], presented the idea of "household management" as a paradigm for education in the broader sense we are looking for. In this view, we learn what we need to about right living (which is the focus of Dialectic's investigation) through the activity of managing our lives and affairs. Life in the community with its economy is the right and good setting for the important lessons that a person needs to learn about right activity in life. Right action is the equivalent of right management of your own economy. (Economy can and should be taken in the broadest

sense imaginable, to include all areas of life, the totality of what you have to deal with in living, both outer and inner, both private and public, so that it is just as important to learn to manage the inner economy of your life energies as it is to learn to make a living.)

Liberal education has to do with the whole of living, acting and experiencing. Through use of the liberal arts, as we are defining them here, we learn to live well and to shape our existences to serve our real needs. In the art of human transformation there is a natural dialectic between the conventions of the accepted culture and the disruption that creative learning causes. This is vividly depicted in Plat's Dialogues, especially in the Apology, the Phaedo, and the Crito, in which this aspect of Dialectic is shown along with its consequences. Conventional consciousness, which arises from social conditioning, can alienate the individual from his true self. It can be seen as a mask for repression, whereby the human self is not only alienated from his labor (in the outward sense of economy) but also from his deep inner strivings, his real biological needs, his creative capacities for love and work (the inner feeling sense of economy), and from genuine participation with others in social life. For life to exist in its wholeness, both individually and socially, the deadening and alienating influences of cultural conventions must be brought to light.

Convention is culture as artifact and object (which

also objectifies and alienates the subject), not as a living process. A living, creative culture is an activity built on the participation of those involved. There is always a tension between convention and creative activity because creating produces results which then remain and endure as conventions. Any culture naturally produces its conventions in this way and relies on them. It is the special task of dialectical liberal education to transmit the aliveness of a culture from one generation to the next while maintaining the conventional forms necessary for the endurance of that culture. This means that, while you cannot do away with conventions and opt for unbridled creativity, neither can you succeed in passing along the creative source of the culture if you merely hand on the conventions. In a way, dialectical liberal education must necessarily subvert the institutions of the culture in which it exists (as Socrates was accused of doing) in order for it to fulfill its task of keeping the culture alive. [15]

Liberal education means here any and all means that a given society uses to maintain and transmit its life and creative energy. It is not necessarily a separate institution of the society, as it has been characterized in our society. In fact, to construe it as such may be its death because then it too becomes a convention. Liberal education takes place wherever and whenever the dialectical tension between alienating conventions and creative

consciousness is faced and dealt with in appropriate ways. (The appropriate ways are the tasks of the liberal arts in their dialectical use.)

In order for the activity of liberal education to happen in a society there must be social forms that make this possible. Because it is dialectical, creative and subversive to ordinary conventional consciousness, the best setting for liberal education would be a social form and order that tolerated change, real questioning, and new ideas; that was responsive to the real, natural needs of its members; that encouraged a real sense of community in which questioning, inquiry, creativity and loving relationships were fostered; and that in general was oriented toward the highest moral/spiritual purposes of living. This kind of setting would approximate the conditions of paideia and make possible the participation of all in the deep self-inquiry that is involved in Dialectic. Such a community paideia, in some form or other according to what might emerge through dialectical exploration, would be a natural setting for deep learning to take place. This learning, by using the liberal arts rightfully, would be liberating and transforming, both to the individual participants and to the society in which it would take place. Such a society would be a dialectical culture (paideia) which would both preserve its valued traditions and be continually renewing itself through creative transformation.

Dialectic, as the practice of this kind of paideia, is the unifying idea that can bring the many and diverse factors that make up a community, together as an active integrity. The specific means for doing this are the dialectical liberal arts. What the actual appearance of such a community would be is something to be worked out in its creative unfolding, but having the idea of it is a big step toward having it happen in reality, for this is the function of an idea - to organize and direct the creative energies of a natural process.

CHAPTER I I

EXPERIENTIAL FUNCTIONAL LEARNING

Introduction

Dialectical education is an instrument of human liberation. [16] In order for it to be effective as such it must be grounded in accurate knowledge of the human condition both in ignorance and in enlightenment, and it must utilize a precise method which is adequate to the purpose.

The method of Dialectic can best be seen in operation in the Dialogues of Plato. [17] However, fairly recent investigation into the modes of living and thinking in classical Greece have revealed that much of history's commentaries on Dialectic and other aspects of ancient culture may have been based on a misconception. Bruno Snell [18] points out that the ancients had no conception of mind or will as we have come to know these through centuries of abstracting intellect. Jacob Klein [19] has demonstrated that the whole modern, symbolic mode of conceptualization is radically different from the ancient mode. The result is that we tend to look at the Philosophy and culture of the ancient Greeks as if they perceived things in much the same way as we do, and this viewpoint leads to a gross distortion in our understanding of the Greeks, and therefore also of

our cultural sources. The same is true of our understanding of Dialectic. There has been an abstracting tendency in the whole of culture which, while it has itself been an outgrowth of ancient Philosophy and lead to many technological marvels in the modern world, has lost the immediate concerns and real human content of the original dialectical intent. This development parallels the rise of a highly abstract, technological culture and the degradation of human worth and existence. Only a more complete and less abstract understanding of the sources of our traditions, and their dialectical essence, can begin to again set aright the course of our cultural life.

A beginning toward this type of understanding of Dialectic exists in the "functional interpretation" of Plato. [20] There, Plato's Dialogues are viewed more as dramas [21] and the dialectical method of Philosophy more as a dynamic process. According to Klein:

Any meaningful interpretation of any Platonic dialogue has to rest on the following premises.

1. A Platonic dialogue is not a treatise or the text of a lecture, like most of Aristotle's works or like the Enneads of Plotinus edited by Porphyry; as Aristotle says in his Poetics, "Socratic" dialogues - and these include all Platonic dialogues, even those in which Socrates is not the main speaker or is not even present - are akin to mimes, like those of Sophron and Xenarchus.

The mimetic character of the dialogues imposes on us the task of correlating carefully the speech, the logos, and the deed, the ergon, presented to us in the text. What is said in the dialogues is not only said, but it is also done, sometimes by the speakers and sometimes by the listeners, provided they listen attentively. Speech and deed remain always tightly tied to each other in the

dialogues.

2. However serious the purpose and the content of a Platonic dialogue may be, its seriousness is permeated by playfulness, since, as we can read in the sixth letter attributed to Plato, seriousness and play are "sisters".

3. Whoever the interlocutors and others present may be, we, the readers, are also listeners and must participate, as silent partners, in the discussions; we must weigh and then accept or reject the solutions offered and must comment, as well as we can, on what is at stake.

4. No Platonic dialogue can be said to represent what might be called, the "Platonic doctrine"; a dialogue may hint at genuine and ultimate thoughts of Plato, the thinker, but they are never set before us with complete clarity. [22]

The terms of the dialectical philosophy are used in an active, doing sense rather than in a static sense. For instance, a key term, episteme, is taken to mean knowing rather than the more rigid and determined word "knowledge". This is in keeping with the re-interpretation of ancient modes of knowing mentioned earlier. It abolishes the notion of Plato being an idealist who originated a mind/body dualism. Such categories were not even in the range of possibility for the ancient modes of awareness and thought.

From this viewpoint it is possible to see that dialectical philosophy is not a theoretical construct, but a form of doing that can only really be understood in the doing of it.

It seems that it is not enough to talk about the dramatic character of Platonic dialogues "from the outside." We have to play our role in them, too. We have to be serious about the contention that a Platonic dialogue, being indeed an "imitation of Socrates," actually continues Socrates' work. This again is by no means a novel view. There is immediate plausibility to

it. And yet its consequences are hardly ever accepted. These are that we, the readers, are being implicitly questioned and examined, that we have to weigh Socrates' irony, that we are compelled to admit to ourselves our ignorance, that it is up to us to get out of the impasse and to reach a conclusion, if it is reachable at all. We are one of the elements of the dialogue and perhaps the most important one. [23]

The question about what dialectical philosophy is and what its value is, then, is a question of method rather than of theory, of action and doing rather than of merely interpretation. It is not my purpose, therefore, in this paper, to give a theoretical justification of the method I present, an explanation of its philosophical presuppositions, or an elaboration of its consequences. What I want to do is simply to operationally define a method or discipline that can be effectively used as an instrument of liberal, or liberating, education. I see this discipline as at the heart of liberal education and I believe that the tradition of critical philosophical inquiry attests to this. So, defining this method in usable terms is justification in itself for this investigation and should be taken as the criterion for its validity. The effects and consequences of the method will have to be seen in practice; that is the nature of any experiential inquiry, and is certainly the case for Dialectic as I am defining it here as functional, experiential learning. As a theory/praxis, the method that I am articulating derives from and is inherently directed back into human action. As theory, then, I can only hope

that it may clarify something of what we are already doing in practice and bring that into fuller awareness.

That "doing" is learning. My viewpoint is that true learning is dialectical, and that Dialectic is functional and experiential. I think that this viewpoint is useful for us in our practice of the learning that we are already doing; it can give clarity, precision and power to the practice by allowing us to creatively form and direct its action. This is its only real worth. If it does in fact lead us to be able to do so, this would be its only proof.

The Dialectical Liberal Arts

The liberal arts are the specific, practical instruments of method which make the dialectical activity work. They are not subject matters or content areas of any field of learning, or even skill disciplines, as some people have suggested. They are the particular method of the ongoing process of dialectical learning, which is the direct experiential inquiry into nature and self whereby transcendental Consciousness is allowed to come out, influence and transform the whole field of the contents of consciousness. As such, they constitute and comprise the conventions of culture. In doing this, the liberal arts are instruments of the natural dialectic in culture and in self, mediating the tension between conventional consciousness and

creative intelligence, as well as healing alienated consciousness through the return to the source of pure Consciousness and a radical, creative transformation of the very structure of experiencing and action. It is only on the basis of this return to the source (in transcendental pure Consciousness) that the liberal arts have their dialectical force and deepest meaning.

It has been a common mistake, due to ignorance of transcendental Consciousness and its easy attainment in direct experiencing, that some of these arts have been seen as means to gain that experience, for instance through intellectual discrimination trying to reach the basic constituents of consciousness. It is true that the liberal arts are disciplines of awareness, but they start from awareness and move into the field of action, and are not means for attaining it. No action can attain transcendental Consciousness, only systematic non-action, as in the TM technique described in chapter I, and in the paradoxical non-action action of Dialectic that will be brought out in this paper as we go along. Much frustration has resulted from this ignorance, and the liberal arts have thereby been misconstrued, misused, and vitiated. In the Western tradition this stems from an abstracting theological interpretation of Being, having lost touch with the nature of Being as pure Consciousness at the very source of experiencing awareness.

Experiential inquiry into the whole field of nature and existence, based on pure Consciousness as Being or the ground of existence, leads to spiritual illumination and enlightenment, which is the ultimate human happiness and purpose for living. The dialectical liberal arts in this context are the means to enter into this inquiry and thereby attain this enlightenment. Used in this way and for this purpose they bring about a thorough and complete transformation of individual consciousness and the cultural forms that arise out of this as the contents of consciousness. The result is personal, social and cultural liberation.

To achieve this, the first task must be a knowing and functioning within ourselves that is adequate to the classical modes of awareness and intelligence that made a functional dialectical learning possible in the first place. This means that we must find ways of recovering modes of learning and perceiving that do not get entangled in the illusions of mind\body dualism; we must frame these understandings within a dynamic, interactional perspective that is capable of maintaining the paradoxical tension that is typical of the dialectical process, and not reduce dialectical process unity to oppositional dualisms, or to static monism; we must have a process of learning that encompasses the entire range of human action and experiencing, while remaining simple and central to the most

important human concerns. The terms, the drama, and the intents of the Socratic Dialectic then become the guidelines for drawing this together into an intelligible order that can serve as the dialectical method we are looking for.

We can begin by looking at Plato. A dramatic, functional reading of Plato shows that there are certain primary concerns of the whole endeavor of his philosophizing. These must be taken into account in any investigation of dialectical method. A few of the important concerns that are pertinent to the present inquiry are: that Dialectic is a particular type of learning process; that its main lines of inquiry are moral (i.e. related to the right use of human abilities); that it always takes place in a social, relational context; and that the terms of the inquiry always relate back to transcendental references (i.e. the ideas of the good, of truth, of beauty, etc.)

However, this investigation cannot be limited to looking at Plato's Dialogues, even though these are the clearest and best exemplars of dialectical teaching and learning, and though we may now have perspectives from which to look at them. To merely do this would be another job of interpretation, and we are looking beyond interpretation to the essential action.

Therefore, we will also be looking at some important learning disciplines which are founded on the ideas of "physiological experiencing", "storying", and "intellectual

art." These three, broadly speaking, can be taken to constitute the liberal arts in their functional dialectical sense and use.

In the following sections I will first of all define "functional learning." Then I will present perspectives on the above three modes of functional learning. This will clear the way for an understanding of the detailed survey of methods used in the functional learning disciplines, which is the content of chapter III.

Functional Learning

The most fundamental perspective that runs through all the functional learning disciplines is that the functional learning process involves the whole psycho-physical structure of the person. There is nothing that happens mentally that is not also a physical event; there is nothing that happens physically that is not a form of mental action (although, since the time of Freud we know that much of this activity is unconscious.) Functional learning, therefore, is a physiological learning process. [24] The living, experiencing body (soma) is the structure of our living, acting, experiencing and learning. We, as conscious, aware beings do not merely have a body; we exist and create our experience and our world as a living body process. [25] Human process is entirely at one with natural process

(physis) and the laws of nature that govern this. Learning, then, like all living, is a process of physical experiencing. Moreover, functional learning is a specific kind of physical experiencing. We can see what kind of experiencing it is by looking at the way it works.

I do not wish to argue that the physical experiential is the only dimension of Dialectic, but I do want to say that it is a fundamental dimension, in which the other dimensions are already implicit, and without which there would be no dynamic movement of learning in the functional experiential sense. The dimensions of rhetoric, argumentation, myth-making, storying; of theorizing, philosophizing, and intellectual art rest on the basic forms of the process of experiencing that are to be located specifically on the physical level. While these others are essential to that process, they do not in themselves constitute dialectical learning. It is what happens in the experiencing that makes for Dialectic, and this is best explored on the direct physiological level.

Particular characteristics of the functional learning process to be presented here are the following:

1. It is a process of changing habits of action on the functional, experiential level, i.e. on the level of self-experiencing prior to behavior or habit, that organizes the whole self for the performance of an action. This is not mere behavior change (substituting one habit or pattern

for another) but a real experiential shift in the intents, directions and the organizing mental/emotional sets that precede action. This reorganization of experiential life can take the form of repatterning body movement, reframing the mental/emotional sets that guide action, revisioning the ideas that trigger bodily responses and /or emotional reaction patterns, redefining a situation, redirecting energies, impulses, intentions or tendencies, or re-interpreting the context of an experience to give it a different quality or emotional charge. These are all forms of restructuring experience so that a new way of responding is created rather than merely a new response, and this gives greater freedom and richness of action and experiencing.

2. It is functional. This means that the learning takes place within (not just by) doing. It also means that it deals directly with human "functions." A function is a whole pattern of action that reveals an internal feeling connection by which we orient ourselves in one way or another in the world. Every action that we perform has components of sensing, moving, feeling, thinking and self-image. A function is the coordination of all of these within the action. It is a sign of the orderly and intelligent direction of the action. Functional learning acts directly on this level.

3. It is experiential. The process itself is based on and embedded in immediate experiencing. Even in cognitive

aspects of the process, the direction is toward direct experiencing.

4. It is somatic. "Somatic" comes from the Greek word soma, meaning body, but not body as object or thing but the human body as a living, feeling, aware process. In this sense, the human soma includes all aspects of what it is to be human; it is the location of all our living, doing, feeling, thinking and becoming. All our behavior is bodily action in some form. The learning process is thereby not just vaguely experiential but it is specifically somatic experiencing.

5. It is teleological. This means that it works directly and specifically with the motives, intents and deep-feeling life-purposes (telos) from which actions are directed and around which functions are organized. The learning process reaches toward this level and uses it as the seed impulse for functional and structural reorganization of experiencing.

6. It is erotic. This means that it follows the natural tendency of the primary somatic life process to be guided and motivated by the principle of love, attraction, and pleasure. Life-purposes (telos) flow from basic feeling needs and these are externalized as interest, movement toward, and pleasure through satisfaction. Using this as a principle, the learning process is pleasurable, fun and bodily (sensually) satisfying. There is a sense of

experiential opening that accompanies the learning, and this motivates the process in a spontaneous, natural way.

7. It is dialectical, meaning that it is a dynamic interactional process that honors and plays with the paradoxical tensions of seeming opposites within the complex unity of the flow of experiencing. It does not reduce experience to either a dualism of mind and body, or body and soul, or existence and Being, or whatever, or to an abstract monism in which everything is the same. Rather, it stays with the practical drama of a complex, evolving unity of process. There is constant play and interaction between teacher and student; conscious mind and unconscious mind; creative impulse and convention; individual and society; eros and logos; symbol and experience, etc. etc.

8. It is a process of individuation, here meaning self-knowing through somatic self-experiencing for the purposes of self-direction and self-creation in action.

9. It is moral, in that it is directly concerned with the necessary components of right action, whatever that might be found to be. In this case, the morality is that of self-knowing, the coordination of being and doing, the alignment of need, purpose, intention, goal, function and action to produce somatic balance, well-being, pleasure and happiness.

10. It taps unconscious learning processes by accessing the natural organic intelligence of the whole soma

on an experiencing level below the conscious thinking mind, and creates a bridge of communication between the conscious mind and the unconscious primary somatic process that governs the autonomic functions and responses of the organism. These unconscious learning processes are the basis for easy reorganization of experiential life below the level of habit patterns and emotional resistances. Tapping into this leads to an effortless flow of intelligent, autonomic direction of action into expression, without the interferences of self-doubt, self-criticism and judgment, or of self-consciousness generally. This allows the easy coordination of being and doing which makes for effective and fulfilling right action.

11. Learning takes place on the basis of awareness, not trying or effort. It is a process of allowing to happen (based on access to the unconscious, autonomic intelligence) rather than of making happen. The state of allowing awareness is variously described as absorptive attention, open-focus awareness, relaxed concentration, or restful alertness. It is the somatic state of consciousness in which the natural somatic intelligence operates spontaneously with least interference. The whole process is automatic when simply allowed to happen. In a sense it is a process that cannot be learned because it is already there and need only be accessed.

12. It is direct and simple.

13. It is specifically a learning discipline concerned with life, experience, human needs and purposes. Some of its insights and method are similar to those of certain approaches in psychotherapy only because that field has studied and worked with the living human process much more than education in general has, but this learning process is essentially different from and is not in any way a form of therapy or a healing practice. Neither is it psychological education or behavior therapy or bodily therapy. Its scope is much broader and at the same time simpler than any of these. Its purpose is to learn mastery in the art of living by actively experiencing your own living somatic process. In this context, mastery comes without reference to dysfunction or disease.

14. It is a dynamic ongoing process and not a technique or a set method. Its application is multidimensional and specific to each situation and to each person. All aspects and levels of the experiencing process are brought into play or considered in every act of learning, for the coordination of inner and outer action, although starting points or avenues of access may widely vary from one situation to another. It is possible to primarily emphasize body movement at one time, the mental/emotional component at another time, the cognitive at still another time, or any other element or all of them together simultaneously or in series. In any case, the

learning process itself is generally the same: the reorganizing and redirecting of experiential life.

I will now identify three separate areas of investigation into the specific forms of the liberal arts. In the actual practice of Dialectic they may not be so easily distinguishable, since there is one ongoing action in which all of them flow as an integral whole. However, this presentation will prepare the way for the descriptions of actual methods of functional learning which fall into each of these areas, and, later in the paper, to the elucidation of the specifically dialectical functional method for achieving liberating liberal education.

Physiological Experiencing

The idea of somatic learning contributes to the understanding of the fundamental action of dialectical learning, for it allows us to see and work with the method of Dialectic as a process of physical experiencing. The methodologies of the various somatic disciplines to be presented in the next chapter can be fashioned, given this understanding, into dialectical liberal arts.

Plato himself can be thought of as having, in a sense, introduced and epitomized the practice of somatic functional learning. One basic component of his dialectical method is that it is "procreation in beauty" [26], and its procedure, as demonstrated in the Symposium, is one of "education in

eros." [27] Since Plato was not an idealist philosopher, as was previously supposed but shown otherwise in the functional interpretation of his works, these ideas must have some direct reference to some identifiable human life experience and not be just ideals.

The somatic disciplines share this idea: although the basic forms and formative forces of our experiencing are bodily, we tend to either take these conditions for granted or ignore them, acting in our lives rather through social masks. Most people are relatively unaware of their physical experiencing or their real biological needs. This makes for alienation from our biological existence. In being thus ignorant, we lose sight of fundamental and necessary areas of our experiencing. These areas become unconscious but nevertheless reappear in unexpected or distorted ways, in our dreams, slips of the tongue, neuroses, anxieties and other forms of dis-ease, crazy ideas and illusions. This whole field of investigation was reopened to our awareness in the modern world by Freud and the depth psychologists.

[28]

Therefore, understanding that Freud's fundamental perspective was physiological, somatic [29], biological [30], and dialectical [31], it is no surprise that now that we have in general forgotten him there should be arising forms of culture that embody his insights. Each of the disciplines to be covered in this paper, in one way or

another, adds to the experiential biological investigation and carries on the reincarnation of ancient dialectical science.

The whole realm of what Plato called psyche, and experiences associated with it, was reopened to strict observation and precise interpretive investigation by Freud, with his rediscovery of the unconscious mental processes and the sexual/erotic nature of these. [32] What he discovered was the paradoxical, associative logic that is proper to dialectical processes [33] and how this is rooted in the biology of the individual. [34] The whole of what he called "primary process" is directed by the "pleasure principle," which always strives for erotic ends. The "secondary process," or conscious thinking self, is an instrument for fulfilling the needs and desires of the primary process which guides the welfare of the organism. There is a dynamic interaction, a dialectic, between these two processes, comprising thereby the life of the individual.

The work of Freud, viewed in terms of the Socratic dialectical intent, can give us concrete references for Plato's ideas of "procreation in beauty" and "education in eros." Procreation in beauty could be seen as the natural tendency of the primary organic process to be guided by the pleasure principle. Beauty is whatever is found to be pleasing, in the deep biological sense of primary process desiring. Education in eros is the process of consciously

entering into this procreating activity in direct physiological aware experiencing. Socratic Dialectic, viewed in these terms, is concerned with the whole of the living human process, and this process has as its essence an erotic feeling tendency to strive for deep organic pleasure and biological happiness (primary process core satisfaction and fulfillment.)

Wilhelm Reich took Freud's discoveries and brought them more deeply and explicitly into the somatic realm. He showed that the unconscious processes are bodily processes and that the erotic pleasure principle functioned as the actual bodily energy. [35] Working with the body and with actual bodily energy is the equivalent of working with the interpretation of dreams in Freud's practice, to bring about change in the psychological characteristics and behavior of individuals. He developed what he called "functional thinking," based on the idea that the duality between mind and body was only apparent and that these two could be seen and experienced as a unity from the perspective of the core energy of the organism. This can be experienced when awareness is opened to the internal organ sensations of the body. [36] It is only the defensive "armoring" of conventional, conditioned man that leads him into dualisms of body/mind, or mechanical/technological vs. mystical/spiritual.

The animating principle of the organism (psyche) has

its own dynamism toward wholeness and what it really needs is to tell its own story, to move out into expression and being in accordance with its own self-determined ends. The encounter that a person has with his own basic, natural self-experiencing (which is biological, physiological) enables him to do this. This process is to not be interfered with but only facilitated. The natural functioning is already there and it knows what to do, has its own native intelligence. This is a fundamental insight common to both Socratic Dialectic (calling the process anamnesis) and to the somatic functional learning disciplines, and this is why these modern learning disciplines are so valuable in the development of an adequate and appropriate dialectical method.

Reich attempted a synthesis of psychoanalysis and dialectical philosophy [37] but didn't succeed because his conception of Dialectic was doctrinaire in the Hegelian and Marxian mode of thinking, and his idea of psychology too analytical to provide insight into the nature of immediate physiological experiencing. However, he was headed in the right direction for the recovery of a somatic understanding of Dialectic. Such a meeting of the lines of inquiry set forth by depth psychology, and a physical conception of the dialectical process, is what is needed to restore the original power and fullness of dialectical method. Also needed is the application not just of functional thinking or

of functional interpretation, but the appropriate use of functional somatic methods and practices. This will be one task of this paper. It will be by proceeding with this task along these lines that the nature of Dialectic as a functional practice can emerge with clarity.

How can this synthesis take place? The first step is to recognize that clear experiencing and skillful action in the world require physical integration. (I use the word "physical" in the sense of the ancient Greek word physis, natural process.) Physical integration includes the whole of the human natural process: all the actions of feeling, thinking, emoting, moving, imagining, willing, etc. Somatic philosophy moves beyond the critique of body/mind dualism to practical means for re-experiencing the unity of mental and physical processes. A direct experiencing of the body as a living aware process creates new perspectives on the uses of all the native human faculties.

It is also important to note that physical integration takes place in successive stages of neurological development and body movement patterning, as a child matures into an adult. [38] These patterns only come into action through use and in response to stimulation from the outer environment. Each of us who is born normal comes into the world with the ability to walk, for instance, but only learns to walk through guidance and example of people around us who already walk.

Learning to walk is a paradigm for the natural somatic learning process. We learn to walk and talk and do other natural activities not by any conscious effort or trying but simply by doing the action repeatedly, getting the idea, the pattern, below our conscious thinking level (which we didn't even have while learning our first movements), and doing over and over again until it is automatic. There is usually something that we are moving toward; without stimulation there would be no motive to move. So, along with movement there is attention (not thought or will but simple attention.) The learning pattern is one of stimulation, attention, use through movement, getting the idea or pattern of the action, and automaticity.

This learning pattern can be used to learn to do just about anything. For an adult who has become conditioned by the conventions of society this may require some change of attitude, but essentially the learning process is simple and easy. The first and most important requirement is an act of simple, innocent attention to the immediacies of experiencing, similar to but more mature than the absorptive attention of the infant learning to crawl or creep. By paying attention simply to what is happening with a quiet, steady awareness, we can learn easily, quickly and masterfully.

This state of simple awareness, or restful alertness, is attained on a level of inward meditation through the

practice of transcendental meditation described earlier. Repeated experiences of pure, quiet awareness restructure the nervous system to maintain this awareness while focusing outwardly in activity. This awareness gives you the ability to focus totally and with subtle discrimination on the action you are engaged in at the present moment, for maximum effectiveness in that action. Because of this, the restfully alert state of consciousness has been called the "master discipline" in the natural learning process. [39] Awareness is the master discipline of the liberal arts because it makes them effective as functional learning disciplines and also liberates consciousness from the illusions and restrictions caused by ignorance of pure Consciousness.

In the last few decades there has emerged a whole new line of investigation and area of learning (new, that is, for our modern age.) These are the somatic functional learning disciplines. They have common principles, complementary methods and sometimes even similar appearances, so that they really form a unity which can be identified. The most important of those disciplines which contribute significantly to the development of a functional dialectical practice will be presented in the next chapter under the headings of "Use of the Self" and "Felt-experiencing."

Storying

To understand what we mean by storying we must look at Rhetoric. Rhetoric is the study and the art of persuasion through skillful use of figures of speech and other devices of that nature. The most basic figure of speech is the metaphor, which is itself based on imagery. All figures of speech have a kinship to metaphor, and take their power and subtlety from the evocative nature of imagery.

The phrase "figure of speech" doesn't confine this field to linguistics or semantics. In fact, it has always been much broader than that. At various times in the history of the liberal arts, Rhetoric was considered to be chief among them all. [40] It was considered so because of its character as a moral discipline which revealed the primary moral intent of liberal education, and because it could shape men's lives; also because its insights into the subtleties of human discourse made it a powerful instrument of social and cultural analysis and critique.

In classical and Roman times the domain of Rhetoric was a central discipline in guiding potential leaders, since it was the study of how to guide one's soul and that of others to the loftiest moral aims that the human spirit is capable of.

When Freud explored the subtle logic of the unconscious, which he called the "dream-work," he was exploring the subtle logic of Rhetoric [41], or storying

(what we might, by analogy, call "story-work.")

The debasement of Rhetoric into the place of derision it has for us in the modern world comes from the misuse of its persuasive methods for many purposes other than the moral one. The rhetoricians discovered, classified and used a great variety of methods of persuasion in their art. As Socrates argued in the Ion and in the Gorgias, only the proper use of these methods is a fit activity, and the use of them for ends other than the attainment of human happiness and right action is sophistry and leads away from these.

Freud, too, pointed out that the stories we create are symbols, metaphors and sometimes distortions of our bodily selves. [42] Moreover, all the forms of culture that we live in and live by are stories, similar to dreams. Their purpose is to elaborate and clarify the ideas or basic patterns that we use to direct our actions. However, being as they are symbolic images, they can either reveal or conceal; they can either create illusion or reveal truth; or they can do both at the same time.

The dynamics of Rhetoric are at work everywhere. We are all busy most of our lives creating stories which both reveal and conceal their creative sources. Knowledge of the forms and workings of the image-action language of stories can make the sources available for conscious use. In this way the dream-world of everyday consciousness may become a

field of play rather than a web to be ensnarled in.

The art of Rhetoric, at its best, has obvious good uses in the transformational community. One of these is the guidance of the young, through enchantment, into maturity.

[43] Another is the leading of the mature, through dialectical disenchantment, into wisdom. Having good stories and knowing how to play with them is essential to individual life and to the aliveness of the community.

A way to explore this positive use of Rhetoric is to examine rhetorical learning, especially as it relates to functional somatic learning. Rhetorical learning, or storying, builds on somatic learning in that at this level we begin to tell stories of our experiencing which are symbolic elaborations of our basic physical self-experiencing. This is the level where physical experiencing starts to take on emotional meaning. The perspective on functional learning which sees it as a way of somatic repatterning, allows us to see the way in which stories can pattern, and repattern, the responses and organization of the experiencing self.

Many have studied this idea. James Hillman, the depth psychologist, has called the use of this dimension of human experience, "storying the self." [44] Bruno Bettelheim, the noted child psychologist, has shown the important part fairy tales can play in the psychological development of children. [45]

Bandler and Grinder have shown the structure of the work of repatterning that stories evoke. [46] Their work in Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) brings out this dimension of human learning in explicit linguistic and technical detail, while maintaining the somatic, sensory base and the repatterning structure so important to the perspective on physiological functional learning we are developing here.

Milton Erickson, from whom Bandler and Grinder's work partially derives, made extensive and extremely skillful use of stories, anecdotes and tales in his guiding of the "unconscious learning" of his patients and students toward effective reorganization of their deep self-experiencing.

The stories that we live by, hear, dream, envision and tell to one another, then, arise out of the most basic core of our somatic process, and in turn form and shape that process. Our bodies tell the stories of our lives, and we use our bodies in gesture, movement, posture, attitude and emotion, to live our stories.

The recognition of our life experiences in these stories gives us a chance to repattern our experiencing and our living. Stories can move the soul by touching the deep-feeling core of our biological experiencing. We can experience ourselves more fully and thus act with a greater degree of freedom.

Stories do this in the skillful use of an experiential rhetoric for dialectical purposes through the poetic logic

of the unconscious. This means that they do their story-work through such means as associative links, dissociation and restructuring, pacing of verbal cues to physical responses, confusion, expansion or contraction of meaning, indirect suggestion, paradoxical intention, amnesia and recollection, and many others. All of these are found in Milton Erickson's work, in NLP, in classical rhetoric and throughout Plato's Dialogues. The uses of legend, myth, story, metaphor, and sophistry in Plato's works is not accidental or incidental. It is a central part of the dialectical method of reorganizing self.

Through storying, then, we learn one of the most important principles of natural dialectical learning: to follow the idea where it leads. [47] Stories have their own internal logic which manifests the forms of natural processes. Following the idea where it leads means following the creative intelligence that created the story, through the physical process of experiencing that underlies it, to its source in pure Consciousness, thereby transcending conventional alienation by the revelation of Being at the source of thought (the source of experiencing and storying.)

As Plato said, ideas lead to the vision of the true, the beautiful and the good. This is the reason he uses myths, stories, legends and tales throughout his Dialogues. It is the reason he wrote dialogues, which depict human

action, to express his dialectical philosophy rather than treatises. The "uses of enchantment" are for storying the self into the integrity and wholeness of natural creative activity. As such, rhetorical learning (storying) is a liberal art very suitable and useful to the dialectical purpose.

Intellectual Art

The primary activity of the functional learning disciplines is self-experiencing. The intellectual level of human action is a further elaboration of physical experiencing, starting from the act of discrimination within experiencing, through metaphorical discernment in storying to very acute distinctions in patterns of abstract signification.

Intellectual art properly reflects on the actualities of experiencing for this purpose: finer discernment of experience and the apprehension of principles (ideai) that inform natural processes. Since the aim of dialectical learning is true self-knowing, all uses of self must order themselves around this aim if they are to serve the soul (psyche) in the attainment of its goal. The use of philosophizing has only one rightful aim, and that is human happiness. Put to this use, the arts of reasoning are dialectical liberal arts.

This section will discuss the links between the

intellectual arts, the liberal arts, and the aims of Dialectic.

Every action is a total physiological response that is, consciously or subliminally, formed and directed by an intention, and thus by a function of intellect. Therefore, when we are dealing with intellect we are dealing with a part of the whole physiological experiencing process - the guiding and directing part.

Intentions themselves are ideas (ideai), not in the sense of abstract concepts (which are the fantasy illusions of speculative reason) but in the sense of "differences that make a difference." [48] As will be seen in our examination of the "use of the self" (in chapter III), ideas are necessary for the effective execution of any action and for accurate experiencing. The proper dialectical function of intellect is to discern those ideas which are governing your actions and experiencing, and to redirect them as necessary for more effective attainment of your true aims. It is therefore very important that the intellect be grounded in the actual experiencing of physical processes, that it be grounded in action. It is liberating and transformational in this way. Uses of intellect that get away from experiencing and from natural processes are misuses of reason.

Various elaborations of the intellectual function in philosophizing either serve and promote this aim, and

thereby serve the basic deep-feeling purposes of human biological processes, or they depart from it into abstraction, speculation and false generalization, in which case they not only distort the intellect but also the whole physiological process which intellect directs.

Kant, the great philosopher of transcendental functionalism, discussed what happens when reason is employed for purely speculative purposes outside the realm of experiencing. [49] He called this level of theorizing "dialectical illusions," which are the phantoms that reason creates when used on its own apart from concrete experience. Freud showed that intellectual dominance (the "superego") represses individuals and whole cultures, creating neuroses and psychoses.

Critical dialectical philosophy holds that the only proper use (in terms of the natural moral aims of the soul) of intellect is discrimination within the process of experiencing itself. This means that all other uses of intellect that cut it off from the act of immediate experiencing, are distortions of its functioning and necessarily lead to disorganization and degradation of self. The practical aspect of Dialectic brings such uses of intellect into severe questioning and scrutiny.

Dialectic stays true to its main idea in all its dimensions, including the intellectual one. Intellect is not a function of mind separate from the rest of human

process. It is actually found right in the most basic physiological experiencing, in the form of discernment and discrimination of sensory and feeling experience, forming these into well-defined perceptions. Whenever we focus our attention on an object we are discriminating the form of that object from other sense impressions. Whenever we make a gesture we are intending that action in a certain direction and directing our body in accordance with that idea. In these activities we are engaged in the intellectual functions of discernment, discrimination and choice.

This is why Socrates is seen throughout the Dialogues puncturing holes in any and every belief, doctrine, theory, opinion or generalization that comes along. It is not that he is anti-intellectual. On the contrary, he is a master at the use of intellectual subtlety. He is ruthlessly destroying uses of intellect that cut the person off from his true nature.

The dialectical use of intellect that is exemplified by Socrates in the Dialogues is for the reframing of basic self-experiencing through the redirecting of the ideas that form and guide that experiencing. This intellectual repatterning takes place within the setting of all the other aspects of self-remembering. In general, the shape that this intellectual dimension takes is to first get to a place of clearly discerning the idea or intention that is

presupposed in your action or belief, then seeing the context in which this idea is generated, and then drawing the idea out fully to a generalization about the action or experience. Once a generalization has been developed, its validity is challenged by placing it in juxtaposition to other contexts in which opposing generalizations are generated. By showing that other, completely different generalizations about the same experience are possible and just as plausible, the validity of the idea as a universal principle by which to guide your action and experience is undermined. You are then thrown back to an attempt to find a more valid and effective guiding idea. If another generalization about experience is attempted, the whole critical destructive questioning process is gone through again until an idea is found that orders, forms and directs action and experience, rather than generalizes about them. This would be an idea which is effective in guiding action toward its proper and truly desired ends because it has been discriminated within the process of the action itself and not abstracted out of it. Thus, your action and experience is repatterned at the level of its inception and first organization into a form through intention.

The means used in this Socratic art of philosophizing is the interplay with the other dimensions to form one coherent art of dialectical learning. For instance, the storying level is used extensively in playing one

generalizing context off against another (or others.) Someone tells a story of his life or experience, from which generalizations are drawn. Another story is told which may show a different perspective on the same situation, and a totally different generalization is drawn. Thus, the story works as an instrument of the critical intellectual questioning, and both of these interact with the feelings and responses that relate the experience that is being dealt with.

Steadiness of intellect is vitally important in the dialectical process, for it is through subtle and sure discrimination in the experiencing that the process of natural learning takes place. Moreover, the realization that brings you into a state of enlightenment is a discernment by the intellect (a spiritual light or illumination) of a truth of Consciousness and experiencing which contradicts the senses and common phenomenal experience (the appearances of things.) [50] The principle is the same here as through all the liberal arts of dialectical learning: to follow the argument (idea) where it leads.

Certain specific means can be distinguished which are particular to this level of dialectical method. These are the arts and methods of dealing with linguistic, conceptual and mathematical symbols, which had their clearest formulation as tools of learning in the Middle Ages as the

"artes liberales," or liberal arts. They are the methods of what we have been calling intellectual art. These consist of the "Trivium" of 1. "grammar," 2. "rhetoric," and 3. "logic"; and the "Quadrivium" of 1. "arithmetic", 2. "geometry," 3. "music," and 4. "astronomy."

These are not to be taken as subject matters or as contents for study as separate disciplines, but as formal disciplines of critical reasoning for dealing skillfully with signs and symbols. [51] For instance, "grammar" discerns the valid modes of signification or symbolization in the reading of any theoretical story, while "logic" sets out rules for valid inference from facts to hypotheses to principles. [52] Used as instruments of critical dialectical philosophizing, they are thus the arts of ordering and re-ordering (re patterning) experience. [53] Taken as part of the art of re patterning (which is the essence of functional learning), these liberal arts can be seen and used in an entirely new way. They can bring intelligible order and clarity to the whole act of experiencing, including physiological, storying and cognitive dimensions.

These intellectual arts are the means by which we become and remain clear, precise, flexible and grounded in our use of intellect within the process of experiencing. They are the instruments that critical dialectical intelligence (nous) uses to question, undermine and destroy

the abstracting reifying use of signs and symbols by speculative reason. Through these arts, the dialectician can skillfully handle the orderly translation of one symbol into another, or one context of meaning into another and back again, or easily handle the subtleties of semantic reference, connotation, denotation, equivocation, shifts of meaning or perspective, etc. etc. Through these skillful intellectual means, the most fundamental intelligible order of your self-image can be revisioned. Because this naturally occurs in conjunction with the somatic and the storying levels of learning, these tools are simply one portion of the greater art of reorganizing the entire self.

Conclusion. Physiological experiencing, storying and intellectual art are levels or aspects of the unitary process of functional learning. What follows in the next chapter are summary examples of principles and workings of actual disciplines of functional learning which correspond to these levels. "Use of the self" and "Felt-experiencing" present functional disciplines of physiological experiencing. "Vision" gives examples of methods and principles of storying. "Questioning" presents aspects of the intellectual arts that are important and central to the development of the dialectical practice. All the methods in chapter III were chosen because of their value in the development of the practice and also for their value in preparing the student for the practice.

C H A P T E R I I I

FUNCTIONAL LEARNING DISCIPLINES (Propaideia)

What follows is a survey of the most representative and characteristic of the modern functional learning methods, with special emphasis on the principles which guide their operations. This survey has the purpose of getting a picture of what functional learning is through many instances of methods which resemble each other but which contribute different important aspects to the field, depending on the particular emphasis that one or the other might have. Beyond this, the purpose is to gather together the most important principles of this type of learning in order to later (chapter IV) synthesize a unified working method for Dialectic.

The ancient saying that man is a rational animal really means that what distinguishes humans from other species is how much we have to, and do learn. Functional learning, as presented in this paper, involves a total reorganization of self in every act of learning.

The functional learning disciplines I have chosen to illustrate this learning process are not arbitrary examples of new and different learning methods. They are varying aspects of a unitary, consistent method of learning. Their consistency and unity will become more apparent when they are brought together later under the dialectical intent and

process. It is in the reframing of these in terms of the dialectical process, its aims, methods and characteristics, that will really bring out their character and usefulness as aspects of a deep transformational human learning process. Until now, they have not been understood in this light, and so have remained varying and diverse, both in theory and in practice.

The most basic commonality of these functional learning methods is that they are all physiologically, somatically based. They all agree, in methods, theoretical formulations and principles, that real learning involves a real physiological change or reorganization. A different, newer, freer, easier mode of functioning becomes established in the governing nervous system and in the bodily organization which follows from this. This state of affairs distinguishes this type of learning ("physiological learning" [54]) from mental, conceptual learning (which, if it remains on a merely mental, symbolic level, is not really learning in the sense of effecting an essential reorganization of self.)

A basic principle exists in each of these disciplines: that of self-experiencing. Each of them involves turning your attention to yourself in action and in experiencing, and this in the most basic physical way, getting into sensations, perceptions, kinesthetic experience, feeling states, images, etc.

Each of the methods also, in one way or another, involves itself in the repatterning (reframing, reorganizing, restructuring, etc.) of your typical modes of functioning, based on this self-experiencing.

This repatterning is essentially different from other methods of reorganizing functioning. For example, it is essentially different from methods of behavior modification. It involves the reorganization of the entire self through dialectical interaction of conscious and unconscious (depth) processes, and not simply a change in habit or behavior patterns. It is also fundamentally different from psychotherapy, because repatterning is simply and merely an act of learning and not an attempt to change, cure, fix, alleviate, work through, heal or adjust, as is the case in most psychotherapy models.

The repatterning methods that we will be examining are essentially interactional. There is a dialectical interplay between conscious thinking and depth psychological processes, and between student and teacher or student and environment.

Finally, each of these disciplines contains varying levels of experiencing. Some emphasize one level or aspect of experiencing more than others, some are more complete than others, some emphasize just a small part of the range. All, however, contribute to the overall method by adding different perspectives to the picture of the full human act

of experiencing. The basic level is that of physiological self-experiencing. The other levels are merely other dimensions or elaborations of this basic level. This is important to remember because these other dimensions have often been taken to be separate unto themselves. They are really part of the physical experiencing process. Taking them that way, as we do here, can reframe the uses they have come to have, into functional means for the full dialectical practice we are looking to develop.

Use Of The Self

Inner Game Learning

Timothy Gallwey, tennis player and instructor, originated the term "inner game learning." [55] According to him, learning is a natural, experiential process easily used and applicable to all subjects.

John Holt shares Gallwey's view and carries it over to a variety of educational applications. [56] Holt says that all learning is learning to do something, and that this doing can be as easy and natural as learning to walk is for most children.

Gallwey generalizes the methods of what he calls inner game learning, inner learning, or simply natural learning beyond tennis to broader learning areas. Some of the

important principles that he enunciates are:

1. There is a natural self, an automatic body intelligence (what he calls "self-2") that guides and controls our actions, behavior and learning without our having to know about it or do it. This allows natural learning to take place effortlessly in the autonomic nervous system. It is the same process that each of us originally used, for instance, as we learned to integrate our movements as we advanced from crawling to creeping to walking.

However, we usually interfere with this process. [57] The efforts and controls of the voluntary nervous system enter in even when unnecessary, and actually can be a hindrance to learning. The critical conscious mind ("self-1") tends to try to take over the control and the doing; this leads to diminished awareness, too much effort (trying) for the given action, overly tight muscles and resulting poor performance and learning.

2. Two modes of learning correspond to these two "selves" or nervous system functions and their operations. The first, which is normal to our culture, is the "trying mode," in which the critical conscious mind tries to govern and control what is happening by making commands, setting standards, correcting errors through force of will, and evaluating results. The second is the "awareness mode," in which the conscious mind determines a goal, sets the attention (the intention) toward that goal, and then allows

the natural body intelligence to perform the action, trusting in its guidance and control. This second mode is the method of inner game learning.

3. Awareness in this relaxed, open mode is self-correcting within the ongoing experience of performing the action. This means that as you pay close attention to what is actually happening in immediate awareness, natural biofeedback takes place that automatically makes any necessary adjustments. The awareness mode is different from both narrowly focused consciousness and from unconsciousness. It is a "relaxed concentration." Because of its central importance in allowing natural learning to take place, Gallwey calls it the "master discipline" which is the foundation for all skill in action and for all the human liberal arts.

4. Love (attraction, interest, desire, eros) brings awareness to an effortless state of absorptive attention in the present moment flow of the activity you are involved in, easily creating the condition of relaxed concentration (restful alertness, open-focus awareness) necessary for the most natural, effective performance. Love draws your attention into the minute details of present experiencing, allowing you to develop that precise perceptual appreciation needed for accurate guidance and control in the performance of an action.

Love (eros), then, is what motivates natural action

and learning. [58] All learning must take place with love in a setting of loving action for it to be effective as natural functional learning.

5. Body awareness (kinesthetic perception) provides the feedback used by the body intelligence in guiding and correcting action. Natural learning requires that close and adequate attention be paid to the inner body sense in the performance on any action. This is what has been called "minding the body," [59] and is easily brought about in a state of relaxed concentration in which action is effortless and pleasurable, thereby drawing the awareness, through love, into its movement.

6. The "inner game" can be learned but it can't be taught. The learning is totally experiential; the teacher may guide the student into useful or correct experience and help clear the interferences, but cannot impart the experience. In this kind of learning, teacher as well as student must enter into the experience, so that both are learning from the experiencing. The process is the real teacher. One person may have become more skilled in the process and therefore be able to guide another, but there are no authorities because there is nothing to know about. In fact, the teacher learns as much as the student while in the process of teaching, and perhaps more because he is more skilled in the detailed appreciation of what is happening. (According to Socrates, it is for self-knowledge that the

teacher teaches.)

Repatterning

This way of accessing the experiential process is through body movement and the sensory base and intentions which guide and direct it. Two body-centered learning disciplines will provide us with clear principles and precise methods for this approach: Moshe Feldenkrais' Functional Integration (FI) and Awareness Through Movement (ATM), and F.M. Alexander's method of psycho-physical integration in which he talks about "use of the self."

Functional Integration. Moshe Feldenkrais developed Functional Integration and Awareness Through Movement as learning methods to change habits of action and behavior. His approach emphasizes experiential discovery in the learning process. Change occurs through reorganizing patterns of bodily movement through direct bodily experiencing. [60]

Some of the most important principles of somatic functional learning come out of this method. Although the method works with the body and specifically with body movement, it is not a form of physical therapy but a learning process which has to do with how we as living aware bodies (soma) organize the entirety of our selves and our experiencing.

The learning takes place through slow, indirect

movements, where sensing and feeling can occur in new ways below the level of ordinary conscious thinking and habits of voluntary control. The functional integration teacher guides a person into this experience either through a guided movement meditation or through actually moving the person with his hands.

On the basis of the new self-experiencing that the person gets through this, he learns a freer and easier way of moving and functioning. This experience of knowing what you are doing as you are doing it is the awareness necessary for improved functioning. It opens up new options and possibilities of functioning, thereby increasing your ability to act effectively. Learning, through this method, is really learning to do, or to do better. [61] The change that results is a reorganization of the bodily self-image which underlies the ability to act and function.

Use of the self. Through experiential investigation of a speech difficulty that he had, F.M. Alexander discovered and developed a natural learning method of body movement re-education that has proven to be very effective and widely used. [62]

Working directly with people in their everyday bodily movement patterns, such as walking, standing, and sitting the Alexander teacher directs new information into their sensory systems through his hands, guiding their movements into new, more efficient pathways. Along with the new

sensory information, he provides new mental directions that fit the new movement pattern, so that the different movement responses may arise out of the new bodily sense and mental direction combination, and not out of an effort to change. This method is a model for experiential repatterning, especially when its principles are made clear.

This method has come to be known as "the Alexander Technique." [63] Generically, the work might also be called "body movement repatterning," subsuming Feldenkrais' work and other similar methods such as Bonnie Cohen's Body-mind Centering [64], which is an approach that takes in the whole range of bodily physiological responses in a kind of comprehensive experiential anatomy. But even the term, "body movement repatterning," is far from completely satisfactory, since the method has more to do with the "inner game" of all human action than it does with merely changing the body. It is very clear and emphasized in Alexander's writings that he is considering the human being as an integral psycho-physical whole. [65]

The method, then, is not a body therapy as such. Although it works directly with the body, it is not the body as object but the body as a living, experiencing, aware process (a soma.) The work is therefore an example of experiential functional learning, and in defining his work Alexander formulated some of the most important guiding principles for this kind of learning. The most important of

these follow:

1. The human self is a total psycho-physical organism in an ongoing process of experiencing. There is no valid functional distinction between mind and body, or between bodily action and mental direction (intention.)

2. How we use ourselves (self as defined above) in all our actions and experiencing shapes the way we react, respond and interrelate with conditions around us and defines our capabilities of functioning in all situations on all levels. The way we use ourselves in whatever we do effects our total psycho-physical functioning, either to integrate that functioning for effective action (which is "proper use of the self" in Alexander's terminology), or to disorder the functioning (which is "improper use of the self" or "misdirected use.") This is the "Alexander Principle." It is the central tenet of his viewpoint on functional learning. Simply stated it says: use determines functioning.

3. Proper, effective use of the self depends on clear, accurate directing (intending) of action based on adequate "sensory appreciation." Right action (proper use of the self), as in inner game learning, takes place by allowing the body self to move by natural reflex in response to an intention, rather than by trying to make something happen. It is the thought-intention into action (the idea as action-intention rather than as notion or concept) that shapes the

action and determines proper or improper use. Once the intention is set in motion, the action happens by an automatic response. So, having the right idea, in this specific understanding of that term, is the most important element for effective right action. (In terms of Plato's Dialectic, right knowing - episteme - according to the idea of the good, is equivalent to right doing or proper use of the self - arete.)

Proper direction or intention in the use of the self rests on accurate perception of self (knowing the self itself - auto to auto in Plato's terms.) This includes but is larger than, the kinesthetic sense that Gallwey talks about in inner game learning. A full body sense takes in all channels of proprioception (kinesthetic, visceral organ sensations and vestibular balancing sensations) as well as emotional feeling states that arise from this body sense and the subtle energy flow that underlies, runs through and (as eros) animates all sensing and feeling. As it is the intention that shapes the action, it is the body feeling sense that is the impetus of the intention. (Without desire, appreciated by the self on the action level of body awareness or physical experiencing, there is no goal or intention and then no action. Human excellence, or right use of the self, depends on a right relationship between eros and idea.)

4. An inevitable result of civilization is that as the

conscious mind develops to cope effectively with increasingly complex and demanding situations, the original, primitive "sensory appreciation" becomes devalued, less used and distorted or lost to a great extent because it is less needed for survival. Along with this, the natural direction and control of the organism which depends on adequate sensory information also becomes distorted. The person loses touch with the natural self. The conscious thinking mind takes over and dominates. Because there is inadequate means for directing the organism as a whole and there is only the partial awareness of the conscious thinking mind, it happens that the "use of the self" becomes distorted and in conflict, through mis-use, dis-use or ab-use of a part of the self against the whole.

The conscious mind, out of touch with the body self and therefore misdirecting action, substitutes end-gaining, or effortful striving for a goal-image, for the appropriate means-whereby to attain a real end (telos) through proper use of the self. End-gaining is the habitual conditioned response of the whole self to a mental image, whereby the mind tries to attain its goal immediately without stopping to discern or choose appropriate means. In more psychological terms, it is the immediate discharge of an impulse through fantasy activity, without directing the energy into reality. [66] The attempt to gain an end without experiential consideration of the actual means to

that end is responsible for all the mental interferences to natural functional learning that Gallwey attributes to the critical thinking mind. The remedy for this is not a return to primitive or infant sensory experience, but to make use of the advanced abilities of the conscious mind to develop conscious direction and control. This is an evolutionary step forward to greater mastery of the self.

5. In a well-integrated organism, i.e. one with proper direction and use, all actions organize themselves around a non-doing psycho-physical ground state at the core or center of the body-self. Alexander identified this as the area of the relationship between the head and neck, and the trunk of the body. He called this the area of "primary control" for the use of the self. Others have extended this perception of the somatic core to include the whole middle interior of the body, in the sense of a subtle energy awareness there. When this area is free and properly organized, there is a lengthening of the whole body and musculature with every movement, accompanied by a sense of kinesthetic lightness. When there is ease in the primary control of the core structure, all efforts and actions are easy, light and natural. There is a sense of being "centered" (the awareness located at the center) and stable in yourself and in all actions and responses.

6. The way to attain what Alexander called "creative conscious control" of the self is to "inhibit" your habitual

reactions to a stimulus at the very moment of its inception, and to substitute proper directions and correct sensory experiences for the old reaction pattern. Inhibition simply means that you refrain from doing anything when faced with your usual impulse to act. This is a conscious decision which cuts off the end-gaining intention and allows a shift of attention to immediate sensory experiencing and different intentions of action. By refraining from acting in the usual conditioned way, by conscious choice you clear the way for new conscious experiencing and direction in place of the unconscious conditioned reaction.

This is not substituting one response pattern for another, as in behavior modification, but the replacing of a reaction pattern by a whole new way of responding. [67] The whole structure of experiencing and the whole organization of the self is transformed by this very simple shift of attention. That is the beauty, simplicity and essence of natural learning.

7. The role of the teacher in Alexander learning is to show the student his misguided use (his "wrong-doing.") This involves putting him into learning situations where he can confront and learn to inhibit his habitual unconscious reactions, while helping him to find the primary control of himself that would allow him to be centered as he enters into action, and providing him with new sensory experience and conscious direction (proper mental intentions) upon

which to base new ways of using himself. As in inner game learning, the teacher/student relationship is directly experiential, but here with more emphasis on the subtle shift of awareness from end-gaining to proper use.

Felt-experiencing

Focusing

Focusing is a method of inner somatic experiencing developed by Eugene Gendlin, a philosopher and psychologist at the University of Chicago. [68] His book, Experiencing and the Creation of Meaning [69] is one of the most important philosophical elucidations of the new somatic perspective upon which the renewal of a natural dialectical practice can be based.

Researching the essence of what makes psychotherapy work for some people, Gendlin discovered that for those patients making good and rapid progress, a direct bodily learning was taking place. The nature of this learning was a bodily felt shift in their inner self-experiencing that consisted of a bodily sense, feeling component, and meaning. [70] These patients had the ability to attend, in a concentrated way, to the process of their experiencing. They were also able to allow the experiential changes that took place as a result of this.

Gendlin identified the specifics of what these people

were doing and described the process. In this, direct bodily sensing and feeling evoke an expressive quality and meaningful expression in a word, phrase, image, gesture or movement. This is in turn checked back with the original feeling sense for a correct match and a deepening of the experience. When there is a correct match of feeling sense and expression, there is a bodily felt sense of some kind of release, opening, softening or relaxation accompanied by a somatic realization of the underlying intent which gave rise to the whole complex of experiencing.

He found that this whole process could be easily taught and learned by anyone, not just for psychotherapy but for all kinds of experiential learning. In fact, it is the "felt shift" that happens within this process of experiencing that is the heart of the reorganization that characterizes natural functional learning. It can be a very simple shift but it is one that has the power of reorganizing a whole complex pattern of experiencing and action. By generalizing the procedure in terms of attention and experiencing, Gendlin actually took it out of the sole realm of therapy and into the more general area of functional experiential learning.

Some of the most important principles of Focusing are the following:

1. All experiencing has actual physical qualities and locations somewhere in the body which can be more vividly

articulated into consciousness by focusing the attention on the body sensations and the bodily felt sense, and words, image or movements that arise from them. Actual experiencing is a complex unity that involves all of these components.

2. You can place your attention anywhere within your physical experiencing. You can direct it entirely, or you can let it direct you, following it with your attention.

[71] Focusing requires both voluntary activity and involuntary allowing. (There is a dialectical interplay between the conscious mind and the natural body process. This is the intrapersonal aspect of the dialectical process.) Awareness is like a spotlight which we can allow to move all by itself and which we can use to focus on whatever we want to look at.

3. "Each person's experience, at any moment, has a specific and unique shape. This shape cannot be figured out by others, nor even by the person experiencing it. It cannot be expressed in common labels. It has to be met, found, felt, attended to, and allowed to show itself." [72] Focusing is the specific act through which we meet, find, feel and attend to our immediate experiencing and allow it to show itself. With this very specific mode of attending to our experiencing, there comes a change or shift in the feeling tone of that experiencing which is actually sensed as a shift or change somewhere in the body. This felt

change in the body sense is pleasurable (and therefore attracts attention), giving a sense of relief, release, lightness and opening, and transforms the whole complex shape of the experience, from the body sensation through the felt sense to the conscious meaning. Studies have shown that there is actually a change in brain-wave pattern at the moment of the shift. [73] "You experience the deeper creative part of yourself working in cooperation with the everyday awareness."

4. Like the other functional learning disciplines, Focusing is based on a state of attention in which the body is deeply relaxed and the mind is very alert. In this state of restful alertness you voluntarily let go of your usual way of feeling and thinking, your usual way of talking to yourself; you let go of the feeling of trying to do something or trying to get somewhere ("end-gaining," in Alexander's terms); you willingly allow the possibility of a felt change in your experiencing; and you let the relaxed experiencing of body sense and feeling create conscious meaning as the shape of the experience changes.

This creation of meaning can take the form of words, pictures, body movements or gestures or it may also simply be on the level of the intention or idea, in which case the connection can be seen with Alexander's use of "directions for the use of the self." An idea can be directed into the process, as in Alexander's technique, or it can emerge out

of the process as it does in Focusing. This meaning of "meaning" as an intention embedded in the process of felt-experiencing, will be very important in the development of the functional dialectical practice we are looking for.

5. Focusing involves a back and forth connecting and fitting of body sense, felt sense and meaning within an allowing "awareness mode." The basis is body sensing, in which you become aware of the quality and location of physical sensations or energies. This body sense is then connected with a feeling sense. You know when the match is correct when you experience an actual shift in the body sense. You then let this felt sense emerge into a meaning or expression, and check it back to the body sense for a shift that indicates a correct fit. This is a type of thinking in which the body (as soma) is the standard of judgment and in which there is active interchange between the conscious mind and the natural body self. It is, in essence, the dialectical way of thinking. (This will come out later, when we go into details of dialectical method.)

6. Prior to verbal thinking is the "whole sense" of an experience. This is the sense or intuition that we feel in our bodies when we're reaching to express something in words that we don't quite have yet, but know inside us. It is a combination of all the non-verbal experience of sensations, felt sense and felt meaning that come before words. Every experience has a whole and also has parts. You can feel

either.

The body sense, felt sense and whole sense are the components of what the philosopher Sidney Jourard called "somatic perception." [74] He said that this unitary complex of experiencing subsumes what Freud referred to as the unconscious. It is equivalent to Alexander's "sensory appreciation," but broader in its scope and applications.

Learning To Focus

Although Focusing is a spontaneous natural act, it can be taught and learned. Those who, like most of us brought up in alienated Western consciousness, are out of touch with natural felt-experiencing, can be led through steps of getting into the bodily felt sense and allowing felt meaning to form out of this. The following is a general guideline of Focusing instructions. The guideline and the steps are not sacred. They are just examples of ways that have been found useful in evoking the act of Focusing in those who do not already just do it.

For the actual practice of Dialectic this instructional way of teaching Focusing is not only not sacred but it is unnecessary and even possibly an obstruction to the specifically free non-impositional dialectical process, which is a process of experiential discovery rather than of instruction. The Focusing

questions as presented here can be adapted and used in the flow of the dialectical questioning so that the Focusing becomes thoroughly dialogical, relational and evocative. This will be important since the act of felt-experiential Focusing is central and essential to the whole practice of functional learning and to Dialectic in particular.

Steps:

1. Clear a space

Relax, get comfortable. Take a few deep breaths. "How are you inside right now?" Don't answer right away. Let what comes in your body answer. Give it time to form. Sense and feel whatever you find. "What's happening with you right now?"

"What's between you and feeling fine right now?" Don't go into anything. Greet each concern that comes and put it to the side for awhile. "Except for that are you fine?" Greet the next concern and so forth.

2. Picking a problem

Feel which of the above concerns most draws you to itself. Ask what most needs attention right now. Let your body choose.

3. Felt sense

"What do you sense in your body when you recall the whole of that problem (or whatever it is)?" "What does that whole thing feel like? What is the feel of it as a whole?" Don't answer with what you already know about it. Sense

into the whole thing, all of that. Give yourself time for the unclear body-sense of it to form.

4. Get a handle

"What is the quality of the felt sense?" Find a word, phrase or image (or even a gesture or body movement) that feels like it matches, comes from or will act as a "handle" on the felt sense, the whole of it. Keep your attention in your body where the felt sense emerges and just let the word, phrase or image happen. "What quality-word would fit this best?"

5. Resonate

Say the handle (the quality-word) back to yourself while sensing into your body. Go back and forth between the word and your body sense.

"Is that right? Is that it?"

If it doesn't feel right, gently let go of the handle, sense back into your body and let another word, phrase or image that fits better emerge. If it does fit, have the sensory feel of that matching several times until you really know it. If the felt sense changes, follow it where it goes (this is the beginning of a felt shift, which is the central movement of Focusing.)

When you get a perfect match, the handle being just right for the bodily felt sense, stay with it and let yourself feel that for awhile.

6. Asking

Now ask the felt-experiential sense what it is. To do this, keep your attention on the feel of "all that" (the whole felt sense of it in the body), hold onto the handle, and ask directly into the felt sense: "What's the crux of this? What's the main thing in all this?" "What is it about this whole thing that makes me so . . . (whatever it is)?"

"What's the meaning of all this?"

"What does 'all that' have to say?"

Don't be quick to answer. Stay with and in the bodily felt sense of the whole of it and let the feeling stir and give you an answer.

7. Receive

Allow and receive whatever emerges. Let it through, let it in. The felt meaning that emerges from the body is often surprising or strange to the conscious mind. It is always at least fresh and new. Don't resist it or start to interpret. Just take it in and learn from it. Let it spread throughout your being and inform your whole body-mind and awareness. If this leads to further shifts, openings, insights or meanings, let them come. Let yourself sense what all this feels like.

Then ask your body if it wants another round of Focusing, or is this a good place to stop for now.

Subtle Energy Experiencing

George Leonard, in The Ultimate Athlete [75] talks about the inner side of sports and martial arts as being based on an awareness of the subtle life-energy that flows in, through and around the gross physical body. Michael Murphy talks about this as the luminous body, or the soul, in his book on the inner game of golf. [76] This inner awareness of life-energy is what makes for mastery, whether in sports or in the game of living. [77] It is the directive force in all actions and is the substance of all the aspects of inner self-experiencing. It can easily be experienced and awareness of it is a powerful tool for recapturing direct bodily experiencing. The most effective action and functioning calls for this kind of experiencing, as was seen in the preceding sections. Reich identified this energy with eros and spoke of it as that which animates all living matter. It is one of the most fundamental aspects of living, and is a crucial element of dialectical method, which is an instrument to promote living.

Life-energy, also known as ki, chi, prana, etc., is the flow of the spirit (Consciousness) in you. It is the unseen and unimaginable, but directly sensible part of all actions, thought, feelings and behavior. In other words, it is the basic component of all felt-experiencing. All that is needed in order to sense and bring it into your awareness is to call your attention to it. Awareness of the life-

energy is a direct approach to acceptance of the larger, universal spirit (Consciousness) in you.

The method for working with the life-energy is to simply discriminate the finer or more subtle aspects of the process of bodily self-experiencing. [78] The flow of energy can be easily experienced and then used, if payed attention to with relaxed concentration. It can then be used to directly repattern any aspect of self. This is a use of "unconscious learning" that is not unconscious. Awareness is a major ingredient of the process, although it is awareness below the conscious thinking level, demonstrating that "unconscious" is only unconscious because we have been conditioned to hold it as such.

One of the main thrusts of Socratic inquiry is to question into the practical, moral life-purpose dimension of human experiencing and open this up as a possibility; life-energy awareness gets into this dimension of experiencing as an immediate actuality. Through awareness of the life-energy in, through and around the body, you are able to contact and master the most basic level of experiencing from which the intentions, impulses and life-purposes that guide action arise. Awareness on this level is the fundamental of human experiencing and is the essential animating component of all aspects of action and experience. It is the life-energy experience that brings into awareness and activates the life-feeling core of the somatic process and makes this

available for conscious use and direction. Life-energy in the body is the feeling sense of the energy of eros which moves the whole somatic process, which gives life, motivation, satisfaction and happiness. Somatic experiencing is shallow and unanimated without life-energy awareness. This life-energy dimension brings out the fullness, depth and rich human meaning of the somatic process and is the basis for a fully human somatic approach.

Jeff Krock has developed The Life Energy Fundamentals out of his experiential research into life-energy. These are the life-energy awareness skills that are essential in gaining mastery of the art of living. The main principle of this learning method is that we are in charge of the life-energy. This means that in our awareness we are able to experience, direct and redirect the life-energy, in its flow, location, quality, dimension and intensity. Basic techniques of grounding, centering, inhabiting the body with life-energy and focusing in the body through the life-energy give you the experience of the ability to direct and control the process. This provides the basis for opening up various aspects of the somatic process or locations in the body to deeper feeling experience, fuller perception and life-purpose meaning.

The following is a list of The Life Energy Fundamentals [79] with brief explanations:

1. Being in charge of the life-energy's flow.
2. Shifting up and down.
3. Being in our bodies.
4. Feeling connected with the ground.
5. Drawing in to our internal worlds.

Life Energy Fundamental (LEF) 2-5 pertain to our internal world. We find here: a solid sense of oneself, feelings, security, inner peace, self love, presence, the foundation for successful and balanced activity in the world.

6. Expanding to our external worlds.
7. Receiving from the external.
8. Equalizing.

LEF 6-8 pertain to our external world. We find here: love, equality, compassion, balanced power in our relationships and activities. The sequence of fundamentals indicates: we need to keep our internal worlds (LEF 2-5) when we are in our external worlds.

9. Having defenses which do not limit us.
10. Including the unknown and the mystery.

LEF 10 pertains to the non-verbal territory beyond ourselves and our external, material world. This part of us cannot be comprehended and is where we find humility and great peace.

11. Creating.

The more life-energy moving in, through and around our bodies, the more alive we feel. Creativity is the act of directing this energy. Happiness is found as we channel our creativity into activities which we enjoy. The more creative energy we channel, the more we naturally serve other human beings. Each of us is a generator of spirit. We do not have to try, or to change ourselves, in order to have an impact on the

lives of others.

Life-energy awareness is simply sensing from inside, and getting the subtleties of that. This kind of felt-experiencing allows deep psychological and neurological repatterning to take place. The life-energy fundamentals are the most basic natural ways of life-energy experiencing, and this kind of experiencing is the purest and clearest form of bodily felt-experiencing. Just as imagery, etc. is more powerful with Focusing, Focusing and the other functional learning disciplines are more powerful, deeper, fuller and clearer with life-energy experiencing. This, then, becomes the fundamental of the whole work of inquiry. This is the ground and basis for all felt-experiential learning (which is really the only true learning - true to self, true to experiencing, true to organic nature and true to spirit.)

The whole functional learning process is basically and essentially about directing and redirecting life-energy, even if this is not usually made explicit. All the experiential reorganizing methods are different approaches or access routes for this; they are structures and processes for contacting, taking charge of and redirecting the life-energy through simple awareness. Making this explicit and referring all the learning back to this dimension makes the whole process simple, clear and direct, and in line with the essential life-purpose (telos) dimension that is so

important to dialectical moral inquiry. It is through experiencing on this level, within the framework of the whole learning process, that real and lasting transformation can take place.

A principle of life-energy awareness is that if a change or shift is not done in the sensing of the subtle energy, coming through into life, it really isn't done at all. What may appear to be a change is only a semblance, not a deep fundamental shift, not a "difference that makes a difference." All the work has to take place within the life-energy in the body, or you are out of yourself, out of your direct immediate felt-experiencing. The life-energy fundamentals are basic. This is the necessary groundwork for everything else in the work of dialectical inquiry. This corresponds exactly to what Gendlin says about being in the body for Focusing. Nothing else makes sense or works without this, and the life-energy awareness is taking this a step further.

In the dialectical use and development of Focusing there has to be more emphasis on and articulation of the inner core bodily sensing of whatever is there (meaning, in the life-energy especially in the core felt-sensing of the body.) This means more pure bodily sensing, questioning into that, staying with that, letting it form, letting it deepen and unfold. Knowing yourself starts here. The method is to deepen the bodily sense, as in Focusing but

going deeper and more subtly, into the level of life-energy, into the deep life-energy felt sense. Detailed and pointed questions into that help fill in the body sense and open out, release, shift and express felt meaning from there. This kind of painstaking work is well worth the effort because it serves as a firm and secure basis for all the rest of the felt-experiential inquiry.

Releasing

Releasing is a functional method of psycho-physical balancing that works directly with the emotional holding patterns that bind the life-energy within fixed, stuck patterns of holding onto self. [80] It was developed by Lester Levenson through a process of deep and prolonged self-questioning [81] and is taught under the name of the Sedona Method of Releasing as a process of direct questioning into the bodily felt sense of emotional patterns.

The actual method involves identifying an area of concern and then sensing the way you hold it (hold onto it) in your body. Through a series of questions you are led, or lead yourself, to let go of the grip you have on yourself in the emotional charge connected with the concern. [82] This act of releasing the emotional charge is similar to the bodily felt shift in Focusing, although the approach to it and the unfolding of the process appear somewhat different.

The typical questions used to facilitate the releasing process revolve around the functional ways that we hold emotions, i.e. attachment and aversion, and the corresponding actions of psychic pull and push. The first question gets at the emotional charge: "Do you want to change this (whatever it is)?" This leads into questions about how you might want to change it. The typical questions here are, either 1. "Could you see this as wanting to control that (whatever)?" or, 2. "Could you see that as a way of wanting approval?" The first question deals with the push (away) of aversion (in order to control), and the second with the emotional pull of attachment.

The key element that is focused on in this process is the bodily felt sense of wanting, i.e. wanting to change something (or someone), wanting to control what is not liked or found to be unpleasant or painful, or wanting approval. This feeling of wanting, or needing, is the specific body-mind location of the held emotional charge. Identifying this as a real bodily sense is what functionally leads to the precise act of releasing, which is a felt shift and opening within that specific sense of emotional wanting.

Releasing questions are any way that you can get at the gripping action on any level where the person can experience that and allow a shift to take place, in and through the person's own way of experiencing and expressing that.

The bodily felt sense of "wanting" is a gripping or a tightening or holding, physically and concretely (perhaps subtly but often evidently.) This is the sensation you are releasing. When you release you physically feel a loosening, a relief, an opening or letting up which is a concrete bodily felt shift.

A practice for the discerning of this is to get the felt sense of "wanting" and the felt sense of releasing; identify these senses as referent experiences. Explore what that felt sense of holding on is in you, in various experiences and situations where you want or grasp at something or feel you need something. Get that bodily felt sense of grasping in its various forms, modes and nuances.

After awhile you can just notice this felt sense when it arises without even having to know what it is about as a situation or event, and release on it, letting love and acceptance flow where it was, and open up. This becomes a habit and a way of being.

When this felt sense has been clearly identified in body-mind experiencing, questions are asked, as in Focusing, directly to that felt sense. These questions follow from the previous ones and have their meaning and effectiveness only in the context of the keen and precise awareness developed so far. Outside of the ongoing felt-experiencing, the questions at this point could be quite trivial.

The questions are, either 1. "Could you let go of

wanting to control this?" or, 2. "Could you let go of wanting to get approval?" They introduce an experiment. It is like asking, "Would you be willing to just suspend your pattern or way of doing things for a moment and try something right now?" Then you just see what happens and go from there.

If the opportunity is taken, which this way of questioning makes easy, there is usually a sense of some kind of internal felt shift, and then the whole situation has changed naturally, easily and without your hardly noticing. This naturally brings about a kind of Focusing into the sense of wanting, with a spontaneous felt shift and opening. The person feels lighter, freer, more relaxed and at ease, and is no longer holding onto himself or to the emotional pattern that he was stuck in. This is an act of releasing.

As in Focusing, the act of releasing can be small steps which can then build on one another into larger releasing steps. Some of the shifts may be so subtle as to be barely perceptible, while others may be so momentous as to change whole patterns of living forever. The functional process is completely spontaneous, wholly determined by the felt-experiential process itself, not by will or mental manipulation.

The questions themselves can vary according to what is happening, what the exact situation is, and what is needed.

The important thing is to follow the direct experiencing into the bodily sense of wanting and to release in and through that.

All Releasing questions are paradoxical. They don't aim at conscious, rational thinking. They may actually be baffling to reason. They aim at the underlying feeling state, which is structured by the ego-self in conflicts of absurdities (such as conditional love versus independence, control through approval, etc.)

So, the questions don't have to seem to make sense. They touch these deep conflicts and absurdities, the strange learned emotional responses on the subtle feeling (unconscious) level.

Emotion is the specifically human feeling level where life-energy moves into action, movement and expression. Masterful "use of the self" on this level rules and governs the outer level of action and expression. Emotion is a crucial regulator of action. It is learned and habituated emotional reactions that keep us locked in patterns of behavior and experiencing. The emotional charge and pattern must be dealt with, brought to felt-experiencing and repatterned from there.

It is the emotional charge that is the energy that keeps us in habitual limited patterns. When this is brought to felt-experiencing, the underlying energy dynamic becomes available for opening, shifting and changing.

Just experiencing the emotion won't repattern anything. Releasing is a whole felt shift (bodily sense, felt sense, meaning and image.) There must be a reaching from the emotion into the inner felt-experiencing. Then there can be an opening, a releasing, a felt shift that really makes a difference.

When this happens then the structures that peripherally organize action can shift and change, with ease and grace, in accordance with the inner shift.

Nothing more easily or quickly lets go of an emotional charge of a situation (or whatever) than letting go of wanting to change it or control it. Doing this in a very specific and detailed way, after feeling the full impact of what was happening in that pattern, is particularly powerful and effective, allowing a deep and moving felt shift that automatically dispels the perceptual illusions that keep the pattern together, releasing the pattern itself and the emotional charge that fuels it.

Releasing is done in a true and deep felt sense. In actual practice, you release on the situation (or whatever) while in the felt sense of the whole of it, feeling the shift as you do this. You go through the whole sequence of discerning the pattern, feeling the impact of it, getting the detail of it, and releasing.

In practice, you psychically release both resistance and holding. Let life-energy pass through you without

blocking it, holding it, resisting it, keeping it away, avoiding it or controlling and manipulating it in any way. Just let it flow as it will. Trust the energy and the experiencing.

Four steps in Releasing (adapted for Releasing from Claire Weeks, Peace from Nervous Suffering [83]):

1. Face it - don't run away. Let yourself be aware of what is happening, of what you are doing.
2. Accept it - don't fight it. Let go of wanting to change it, get rid of it, etc.
3. Let it happen - don't tense up. Let go of wanting to control it.
4. Let time pass - don't push. Let go of "end-gaining": wanting to make something happen, the push for some outcome.

Do these steps in felt-experiencing and notice, feel and get the shifts that happen in your felt sense of the whole of it. Allow this new way of being with the whole situation.

When you release (or forgive) in this way your perceptions automatically shift, along with the felt shift, away from feeling attached to the feeling, to being centered in yourself and your direct felt-experiencing, seeing the situation or person in a new light, in a new perspective, and thereby being able to love and accept from that centered place, and then being able to actually extend love - feeling the life, power and mastery (through moral choice) in that

lighting and lightening up of the whole situation. This is de-hypnotizing and de-entrancing.

Releasing the wanting to change, control or get approval releases you into the deeper true intentions that come out of your inner felt-experiencing, which is your natural intelligence. Releasing is a necessary step into this atunement. Then there is a natural emergence.

Thus the Releasing method is organic learning and somatic repatterning on the mental/emotional root-cause level, analogous to the bodily movement repatterning of the Alexander and Feldenkrais methods.

Wanting to change something is the emotional basis for the "trying mode" of attention and action. Letting go of wanting to change something is the simplest, most effective, truest and most fundamental way of letting go of the trying mode at its place of origin. Releasing is a deep psychological surrendering of end-gaining into the experiencing of process. It is a giving up of gripping, grasping, holding, on all levels (physical, emotional, mental, spiritual, etc.)

The method of Releasing is a non-oppositional, non-resistive way of living. It is a letting go of opposition and resistance to flow on the most fundamental level of discernment and experiential choice. All other factors in the structures of experiencing release from there and are tied into that level. If you don't touch into releasing

from there you may have released some aspect of the pattern but you are still opposing and holding on at the most basic level, and this is bound to recreate the pattern. You have only truly released to the extent that you have let go on the level of basic felt-experiential choice.

In releasing you let go of your opposition and resistance to whatever is, to whatever is happening. This is a natural, effortless shift into love and acceptance. Releasing is a way of non-resistance. Both resistance and holding are aspects of the alienated and separated ego-self. They both have the object of trying to control, and this is operationally just what ego is.

The emotional reaction patterns of wanting control (or power over) and wanting approval (both instances of wanting to change something) stem from a primal fear for survival, the mistaken belief in being a separate ego-self, alone in opposition to others and the world. The relinquishing of attachments (and "problems") in Releasing is functionally the equivalent of the relinquishing of the perceptual belief in the separate ego-self. The feeling of wanting or needing control or approval, are two sides of the same complex of perceptual illusion, based on belief in a separate, conditioned self acting for survival in a field of conditional love. Love is taken to be a thing or commodity, which is not only gotten on the basis of behavior but is also in short supply. The unconscious, unquestioned

perception seems to be some form of the belief that one is always under attack. The reaction pattern is a push/pull: control is the push that counteracts the threat; the need for approval is the pull or seduction into being controlled in order to escape the (supposed) threat. From within the reaction pattern itself neither of these stances nor the perceptual beliefs that underlie them are brought into question or into consciousness, and so the reactions play themselves out mechanically.

The only reason one is ever unhappy is the stance of holding onto something, in either wanting approval or control. It is a wanting to get control or a wanting to get approval - a grasping for what is believed and consequently felt to be lacking - that is the cause of holding patterns in the life-energy.

Releasing is the central somatic movement in letting go of beliefs, concepts and attachments which are the outward forms of misqualification of life-energy (of eros, i.e. feeling.) Freud was right about resistance being the key to the mechanism of repression. However, the resistance doesn't need to be analyzed or worked through. It needs only be discerned and released. The process is to release, discern and shift.

Resistance is holding onto something unconsciously with suppressed feeling, by wanting to change it or control it. Letting go of wanting to change it releases the whole

pattern of resistance. This is directly analogous to going with and following through on a dysfunctional body movement pattern in order to release it, as in the body movement disciplines, rather than going against it or working through it in order to change it. You accept it, let it be, and it releases naturally.

This does not mean the kind of acceptance that is a moving into the pain or suffering of it all, going right into the feeling or sensation to get it all. It is simply letting go of the holding onto it that is the resistance in the whole situation caused by wanting to change it - and this is very different from wanting to change it.

There are several different choices in consciousness in regard to feelings, or mental/emotional states.

1. suppressing.
2. repressing.
3. escaping.
4. denying.
5. acting out.
6. analyzing and working through (as in traditional psychotherapies.)
7. moving into and through (as in cathartic and primal psychotherapies.)
8. releasing - perceptively discerning the feeling, letting go of wanting to change or control it, and shifting into a new felt sense of the whole of it, thus enabling a

completely different and unique "use of the self" or direction to go in, with the feelings.

Releasing is the elusively obvious alternative to repressing, acting out, evading or trying to work through feelings. It is a completely different direction (choice) than any of these. Releasing on feeling the need to control or change a feeling (sensation, or whatever) opens you up to trusting yourself and your experiencing. That learning to trust is an important experiential choice that can accompany the release. The felt shift of releasing brings a felt sense of opening and peace. This is a sure sign of the truth and rightness of the shift.

This level of releasing prepares the way for the deeper releasing that is the forgiving of self and others, and the more profound shift and choice to trust the greater spirit or being to live and guide our lives. (Forgiving is an inner felt shift of releasing the feeling of wanting another person to be (or have been) any other way than what they are.)

So, first you release on feelings, sensations, etc., and choose to trust self; then release on self and others and choose to trust the divine love and spirit. This is a process of ever deepening surrender. Releasing flows into forgiving and this into profound acts of surrendering to life itself, to Being, Spirit, Presence, Love.

From the perspective of the grasping ego-self, this

practice is a kind of dying. This deep experiential releasing is, functionally, what Plato meant by saying that Philosophy is the practice of dying. Dialectic, as true Philosophy, makes this its central focus. To do Dialectic is to practice dying in this way.

The specific act of releasing, as the practice of dying, is what is central and common to Socratic Dialogue, Focusing and all forms of repatterning. It is the central act of metanoia - the shift to a different mode of functioning (the shift from mental "end-gaining" to direct felt-experiencing; from believing to direct intuitive knowing; from alienation to being.) Dialectic brings this out explicitly and pointedly in its practice, and does this on the deep personal, moral soul level.

The teacher practices dying more than the student. He releases at every moment, at every point along the way in the dialogue, in order to "follow the argument where it leads", which is the way of dialectical anemnesis (fundamental deep recollection) and aletheia (the emergence of truth.)

Presence

The work of Richard Moss [84] takes subtle energy awareness and experiencing into a deeper relational and transformational context. In the transformational work that he teaches, the subtle life-energy is experienced as deep

ontological presence in transpersonal relationship, and as opening to finer and ever expanding states of Consciousness (Being.) This takes the form more of a transcendent surrendering into deep immediate relationship than of detailed focused directing of the life-energy as in The Life Energy Fundamentals. The life-energy is sensed but not focused into and directed, so that it is merely allowed to refine and heighten (in subtlety and subtle intensity), carrying the awareness to greater openness, sublimity and availability for deep essence connectedness in relationship.

The method is relationship more than technique, in large groups in which the energy is particularly heightened, and in small groupings and one-to-one connections within the larger group attunement. There is an intentional dedication to the sacredness of the spiritual relational presence in these gatherings, and a sublime and profound awareness of this is maintained throughout. This consecration allows the relationships to deepen into transcendental experiencing of unqualified, unconditional love, and the group to experience a real and tangible sense of true communion and oneness (the "I that is we", as his first book is called.)

In Moss's group conference work use is made of meditation, music, movement, chanting, ritual and life-energy attunement exercises to bring the group and the individual participants into a direct experiential opening

into deeper states of beingness. Moss has said of this work:

The door to wholeness is entered when we open our hearts and release our self-centered perspective. This is the purpose of a transformational conference. My experience over the years has shown that people able to surrender into the group energy emerge more capable of being themselves in any context. This work is not easy, for it entails releasing egoic control at levels that are preconscious. Hence, in this work we begin with the Energy or Presence that is the context from which our life and all the content of our awareness emerges. The conference work is to awaken a sense of that Presence and to intensify the egoic dynamics indirectly through the heightened energy until they release spontaneously. It is a work that is essentially spiritual for it transcends focusing on the content level of life. For wholeness is paradoxical; there is progression, yet, we never gradually become whole. To reach wholeness we must begin from wholeness. [85]

Opening to Presence is relinquishing of ego, form, structure and control, not into nothing but into the fullness and vastness of the unconditional presencing of being, of life-energy in pure relationship, with the inner core of self connecting unconditionally in love. The subtle finest essence of the process of transformation is the opening to Presence. Presence is life-energy in unconditional relationship. It happens only in relationship (to life, to others, to feelings and emotions, to ego structures, to anything and everything that comes up as a content of consciousness.) Presence is wholeness - the "prior wholeness" that is realized in the moment of this awareness.

What we are talking about here is a deep self-transformation into a condition or process of "radical

aliveness" (Moss.) This involves a releasing of ego into wholeness, releasing all that we think we - or they - are, and all that supports this (including belief systems, images, sensation and perception, all that we think we know, etc.) into Presence, Love, unconditional Being and wholeness, in the immediacy of felt-experiencing. Release and surrender are what flow energies into wholeness. This is a releasing into a greater Consciousness, not into nothingness or into a bigger ego (substitute belief system.)

In this process transformation takes place through successive subtle energy shifts, deeper and finer than the usual felt shift in Focusing. It is subtle-izing the energies that are in you, tempering them all together into a dynamic harmonious fine vibrational wholeness.

The inducing of higher level energies spontaneously resolves lower level "problems", without giving attention to them. Giving them attention strengthens them and creates greater conflict and polarization.

The inducing of higher energies spontaneously resolves polarities, polarizations, positions and poses. Opposition happens only in relation to some position. Op-pose happens in response to pose. The lower level energies match and react to each other. Going to a higher level and more subtle, finer energy state releases the stuck qualities of the lower level oppositions. The higher level energies are the subtler, finer energies in consciousness.

This works the other way also. The releasing of lower level problems and energies spontaneously brings you to higher level energies. With release there is a natural movement upward and a natural opening.

So, both of these contribute to each other; they are one movement from different approaches.

The finest essence of transformation is in psychically releasing separateness, ego, into relationship, availability, Presence. This concretely and experientially transcends problem orientation and fixation.

According to Moss, he has found in his work that the higher the level of intensity of an experience the less the transformation. The most profound energies are low intensity (i.e. fine and subtle.) The energies of transformation are the quiet finest feeling levels of consciousness. Transformation takes place in that connection and release that is an experiential felt shift on the quiet, subtle energy level.

This finest feeling level of subtle energy experiencing is, functionally and for the purposes of the method we are developing here, what the ancient Greeks call psyche (soul.) It is the life-force as a living aware presence, self-referential in its own consciousness, not as a concept but as direct, immediate felt-experiencing. It is the entire realm of subtle energy experiencing, in life, forming life, patterning, shaping, moving, creating,

interacting, flowing, extending and receiving. It is the deep experiencing of Presence, of the life-energy (spirit) embodied and individualized, aware of itself in living, moving and felt-experiencing.

Life-energy, in felt-experiential awareness, is psychic energy, the energy of soul. It is the most basic and fundamental level of experiencing. Psyche is real because psychic energy is real in direct felt-experiencing. We can be in the flow and experiencing of this and know it directly as presence. Being alive to the life-energy vibrating, radiating, feeling within you is to have and to radiate soul. The concrete experience and meaning of knowing yourself is to be awake and alive to that life-energy fullness and radiance in you. To know yourself, truly, directly, consciously in this way, is the same as having soul. This is "radical aliveness."

Your vibration (your subtle psychic energy radiance) creates what you experience as perceptual reality - everything that you experience, feel or do, everything that is a content of consciousness. Behavior, conditions, circumstances, events, etc. are results of vibration in consciousness on the deepest, most basic level. Experiencing the vibrational energy quality of experiencing is essential to the awakening of the soul (bringing psyche into awareness and action.) This means gaining awareness of finer energies throughout the many and varied levels of

experiencing, from the grossest sensory to the finest inner sensing on into transcendental pure being (infinite unbounded pure consciousness.) This energy is essentially what we work with in Dialectic. It is the essential stuff of life and of felt-experiencing. In Dialectic we become aware of it, form it, transform it and move with it, in it, in life and as life. The exploration of this "energy body" in higher, finer, subtler vibrations, is what awakens soul. Radical aliveness, radical transformation, is to live your soul, as Presence, in radical unconditional relationship (no holding back, no withholding of self.) That is a primary aim of Dialectic as a "caring for the soul" (psyches therapeia.)

Unconditional love is availability for relationship with absolutely everyone and everything. On this level and in this way it is impersonal. The level of the love is equal to the level of awareness and energy. Transformation is going to a higher, finer energy potential (awakened energy) - a new flow of energy current opening up. This is a finer vibration in an awakened awareness that sweeps away the mirages and illusions of the lower mind - the shadows on the wall of the cave (cave allegory in the Republic.) The connection to divine love and presence (unconditional love) is in and through psyche - through direct psychic energy experiencing - in order for it to be true, real, meaningful and consequential.

What Moss calls availability is a step beyond

acceptance. It is a greater presence and openness in relationship, from essence. It is relating from essence to essence. Releasing is easier within this energy relationship (energy sharing.) In this there is a space filled with tangible love energy to release into, and the love relationship itself as a higher context for restructuring (repatterning) the energy dynamic and all that flows from that. Held energy just more naturally and easily releases.

This is a core and essential dynamic of the dialectical love relationship that is a main element of Dialectic. In this the teacher releases into the higher energy more than the student - surrendering into the attention that maintains the open energy dynamic, thereby allowing the creative love context to emerge and develop. The teacher is lover - having a soul relationship with life, with the flow of life-energy, in his loving attention.

This psychic energy experiencing (experiencing of psyche), then, is primary to the work of dialectical transformation. It is what we must become aware of, care for, nourish, evoke, culture and love in order to be fully human, alive and happy. This life-force is the connection and the uniting of Intelligence (Consciousness) and life (physis, physical bodily felt-experiential life.) The awareness of this life-force is felt-experiencing, and is the way to true self-knowing, which is a primary aim of

Dialectic.

Vision

Visioning

Psycho-cybernetics was developed by Maxwell Maltz, a plastic surgeon who discovered that many of his patients still felt and thought of themselves as scarred, even after their physical appearances had been reconstructed. He realized that much more was involved in a person's self-image than outward appearances. He devised ways of helping people change their inner feeling-sense, or self-image of themselves, and thereby change their lives.

Maltz's approach [86] centers around the experiencing and repatterning of the self-image, and the psycho-physical mechanisms of experiential feedback that make this repatterning work. Much of the method is similar to inner game learning, but this approach brings out some important principles not found there:

1. Our self-image is the basic premise of our existence. All our actions, feelings, behavior and even abilities are based on it. We act in accordance with the principle of always being consistent with our self-image; we unconsciously reject anything that is inconsistent with it. A whole system of ideas, beliefs and opinions consistent with the self-image build up around it. These condition and

determine action and reaction.

Although Maltz sometimes talks about the self-image in merely psychological terms, as the ego ideal or the concept we have ourselves, the real thrust of what he is saying is that the self-image is experiential. He says that it is built up through the experiences we have, and talks about dealing with it in experiential ways. In any case, its real importance for us in this study is as actual, physical self-experiencing, and not merely as a psychological image. When Feldenkrais say, "We act in accordance with our self-image," [87] he is most definitely referring to our self-experiencing on a bodily level. This is the way we will understand it here.

There has been some confusion of terms in the literature on this subject, mainly, I believe, because there is confusion about self-experiencing in general. Some of the terms used to refer to pretty much the same experience are: "self-image," "body image," "body construct," "body memory," "body concept," and "body percept." [88] All of these are aspects of one complex of experiencing, which, because of improper "use of the self" based on distorted "sensory appreciation", is mostly unconscious, but not the less influential in our lives for being so. The self-image is the "whole sense" (in Focusing terms) of our somatic perception of our total psycho-physical self. The body-image is that aspect of the total experience that is on the

body sensing level, underlying felt sense and meaning. It is this pre-verbal "whole sense" of ourselves that we act in accordance with, whether it be unconscious and conditioned or conscious and articulated as the basis for right direction in the use of the self. When viewed in this way, the self-image constitutes the whole structure of our experiencing, which is the basic factor in all functional learning.

In Plato's dialectical philosophy, knowledge of self is the basic factor in attaining human excellence (arete) and happiness (eudaimonia.) The idea of self-image, as in the above understanding, gives self-knowing a physical experiential substance. It could be said, then, that the self-image is the idea of the self. In dialectical inquiry we are always led back to underlying premises to examine them and adjust our idea. As self-knowing is the central focus of dialectical inquiry, it is the self-image as the basic premise of self and its use that we should basically be concerned with. When Socrates asks Alcibiades (in his dialogue, Alcibiades Major [89]) to reply truthfully in accordance with himself and leads him into deep feeling experiences, he is leading him into an experience that we can identify as a felt sense of his self-image, such as it is at that time in his experiencing.

2. The self-image is created by experience and can be changed by creative experiencing. Experiencing to repattern the self-image can be creatively produced. We can be active

rather than passive in our experiencing, so that we choose our experience. All our experience is based on acts of attention, selection and decision forming our perceptions, so we can attend to, select and choose different aspects of experience. The human nervous system cannot tell the difference between an "actual" experience and one that is imagined vividly and in detail (and also felt, as in Focusing. [90]) Feldenkrais makes use of just this type of imagery creation in his method of repatterning neuromuscular use.

This gives another clue to the pervasive use of myths and stories in Plato's Dialogues. Imagery that touches the soul (psyche, inner felt-experiencing) rechannels the energies, motives and desires of the whole self.

This principle applies to choosing new "actual" experiences as well (for instance, choosing to put yourself into a new, unfamiliar situation or simply choosing new aspects of some familiar type of experience, or, as in Alexander learning, choosing to inhibit a conditioned response and enter into new sensory experience.) The important thing about imagery is that it be in immediate felt-experiencing. This use of imagination is very different from fantasy or end-gaining.

3. The repatterning of an action (a use of the self) must be directed primarily at the self-image. Once the self-image is changed, other things consistent with the new

construct are accomplished easily and without strain. This is a principle that holds true for all functional learning.

4. The force of habit based on our responses and reactions to memory impressions, images, etc. is stronger than our will to change or learn. It is futile to try to change by will power. Change of habit must come about by changing the image impression upon which the habit is based. New responses can be created without will or effort in the same way as the old ones: through experiencing and imaging. But now it is created consciously. This can be done for particular reaction patterns and for the self-image as a whole.

5. In order to really live well and find enduring happiness in life, you must have an adequate and realistic self-image that you can trust as the basis of your actions and responses. It must correspond to reality so that you can function effectively in the world.

This means that you must have good somatic perception ("sensory appreciation") of yourself. This is the basis for adequate and skillful direction of your actions. Proper use of the self rest on an adequate, full self-image.

6. It is the desire for happiness and more life, coming out of your deeply felt needs, aspirations and desires, that causes you to act, move, create and experience. This urge toward happiness causes you to move toward goals. Every action tends toward an end (telos.)

In Plato's Dialectic it is the urge toward happiness, which is through the impulse of eros, that is the telos, or end, for human beings and which determines their actions. The function of direct intuitive intelligence (nous), which is the proper use of intellect, is to discern the ends in life that will produce enduring happiness in accordance with the laws and principles of nature (physis) operating in the self; and to properly order all actions through appropriate ideai (i.e. directing the use of the self through skilled intending.) Thus, Dialectic is the process of erotic integration of the essentially desiring self, through intelligent direction of the use of the self toward real, experiential, well-formed, enduring happiness. What this happiness is and what it might look like in attainment, are to be known only in the inquiry itself into idea, eros and telos.

7. The natural body self (what Maltz calls the "creative mechanism," and what we could call "natural creative intelligence") acts purposefully and automatically in response to the instructions it receives. It is a built-in guidance system for reaching ends through feedback mechanisms. It works clearly and efficiently to attain goals only when the goals are clearly formed. It uses the data we provide it, automatically responding to the goal-image it is given.

What we intend is what we get. When the intentions

are clear and well-formed, the action is well-directed and is carried out by the bodyself with accuracy, clarity and grace. If the intention is unclear, conflicted, unreal or in some other way misdirected, the action becomes bungled in accordance with this intent. This shows the essential importance of getting clear about what you want. When intentions are the adequate expressions of felt needs properly discerned, they are well articulated and naturally result in effective, fulfilling action. The meanings we create in our experiencing, whether unconsciously and habitually by conditioning, beliefs, fantasies, notions, etc., or consciously by new active experiencing, shape and form our lives either for the good or into disintegration.

8. "It is characteristic of all learning that as learning takes place, correction becomes more and more refined." [91] Successful responses are remembered and repeated automatically. Thus, you can trust the bodyself to learn by itself.

9. Learning by gradual steps helps produce and maintain the sense of ease that is necessary for natural learning; it allows a feeling of constant forward achievement rather than the strain of striving beyond your current ability.

10. Emotion flows according to what we are intending, to reinforce that intention and give strength of motion to it. Emotion is really only excitement and it takes many

forms according to how we are inwardly organized (the way we are using ourselves) at the moment. We don't need to try to control emotion or excitement (eros), but simply to direct the choice that determines which intention receives the emotional reinforcement. Intelligence (nous) direct eros to its proper end (its telos.)

Reframing

Reframing is an access route through the felt-experiential components of communication, utilizing the natural absorptive attention and suggestibility inherent in all communication but especially in skillful communication. A master of this art was Milton H. Erickson, who made extremely skillful use of such devices as indirect suggestion, stories, anecdotes, paradoxical intention, metaphors, imbedded metaphors, hypnotic phenomena, etc. etc. within the process of communication (reminiscent of the ancient masters of Rhetoric), to alter and transform the basic organization of a person's experiencing. This is done through very careful attention to physiological signs and cues that are not usually noticed or acknowledged, by trusting the unconscious learning processes, and by re-accessing aspects of a person's life experience that may have been forgotten, repressed or overlooked.

Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) is a codification and simplification of Erickson's approaches to reorganizing

basic experiencing. It is mainly useful for its clear presentation of step-by-step procedures for reframing behavior and experience.

Maltz's Psycho-cybernetics is related to these in that it works mainly on the neuro-psycho-physiological level and deals primarily with experiential transformation of the basic self-image. Changing the self-image changes the premise on which action and experience is based; this work is therefore fundamental to any functional change, is an implicit aspect of all the learning disciplines that deal with redirecting experiencing, and is basic to the art of reframing.

Also, Paul Watzlawick and his associates, in their studies on the pragmatics of communication [92], have presented specific tactics and strategies of reframing on the linguistic level. Their work is valuable in defining this approach as a practical working method.

Milton Erickson was a wizard at enabling people to bring about changes in their lives rapidly and sometimes almost miraculously. He was a master of "unconscious learning" (his name for what Gallwey called "natural learning", or what we have called "physiological learning.") [93] He found that every person had it within himself to do what he wanted in life and that all he needed to do was to realize what he already knew and utilize it in effective ways. Erickson would, by various means, get below the level

of a person's conscious mind and resistances, and reorganize his neuro-psycho-physiological patterns of association so that he would then act differently based on this new organization.

Bandler and Grinder's NLP abstracted important principles from this. [94] The clearest contribution of this to functional learning has been the very close attention it pays to how our ideas or intentions form our experience. By doing this it has created a useful framework for reframing, and thereby transforming, the patterns of our ideas and experiencing. (In this light, the dramatic movement of Plato's Dialogues can be seen as constantly reframing ideas, so that this insight into a precise method of reframing can be a valuable addition to our effort to understand dialectical method.)

The NLP reframing outline is as follows (abbreviated):

1. Identify the pattern to be changed.
2. Establish communication with the part responsible for the pattern.
3. Distinguish between the behavior and the intention that is responsible for the behavior.
4. Create new alternative behaviors to satisfy the intention.
5. Ask the part, "are you willing to take responsibility for generating three new alternatives in the appropriate context?"
6. "Is there any other part of me that objects to the three new alternatives?"

Like Focusing, this scheme shows a dialectical

interplay between the conscious and the unconscious selves. It is a good frame of reference which would be deepened by using Focusing in the interplay. They both use the back and forth dialoguing, but Focusing attends specifically to the elements of experiencing in its totality. Also, the steps should be carried forward into the stage of acting out the new alternatives.

This method is parallel, on a psychological-emotional level, to Feldenkrais' repatterning. Both Erickson and Feldenkrais work to reorganize the entirety of the self on the most basic levels of self-experiencing. What Erickson calls unconscious learning, Feldenkrais simply calls learning.

These reframing methods make use of what NLP calls "the structures of experience," or "representational systems." These are the ways we mentally represent our experience to ourselves, in various types and styles of images. The main categories that are distinguished are: visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and visceral/emotional. There are finer distinctions of these called "sub-modalities." They are all considered to be images (a much broader meaning of "image" than the usual one.) [95]

These "structures of experience" are the structures of perception, in practical terms useful for a method of experiential inquiry such as we are developing here. NLP type exploration, used dialectically, is a way to explore

the way the person organizes and uses the structures of experience (representations, experiential signification, patterns of communication of meaning.)

NLP, etc., deals with hypnotic effects - the perceptual world of illusions and shadows. Dialectic uses the same material of perceptions to wake up and liberate from the trance of illusions and shadows. Awareness of what is happening and what you are doing, with the shift to subtle felt-experiencing brings illumination and freedom. Dialectic helps you to wake up from the trance of mental images to the clear, centered world of felt meaning (idea.) Dialectic is de-hypnotizing.

Dialectic deepens the exploration of the structures of experience into bodily felt-experiencing, as in Focusing, so that true felt meaning may emerge. The representational image (as in NLP) is only one aspect of the whole complex of felt-experiencing, which includes body sense, felt sense and emergent image (as an expression of the whole felt meaning.) Dialectic explores images as "feel-images" (as in inner game learning) and not just as mental representations.

However, there are "laws of suggestion," developed in the field of hypnosis and NLP that are useful in the dehypnotizing work of Dialectic because they help to make the subconscious process available for exploration and repatterning. The use to which these laws are put in Dialectic, though, is radically different from the methods

and values of hypnosis and its allied methods.

The "laws of suggestion" developed in relation to hypnosis and autosuggestion techniques [96] apply to the methods of reframing, which are more modern developments of the same tradition. In terms of the dialectical work they are applicable as laws of projection of ideas (which can be better understood later when we have discussed the meaning of idea.) All the laws of suggestion take the form of the associative logic of the unconscious, as uncovered by Freud and the line of investigation that he started. They are not the logic of the conscious thinking mind. In dialectical terms (re-interpreting suggestion as idea) they are more along the lines of "directions for the use of the self."

Laws of Suggestion:

1. Law of Concentrated Attention

Any idea that is repeated over and over again tends to spontaneously realize itself. Another way of putting this is that "an idea always tends toward realization." [97]

The idea can be represented in any way - verbally, pictorially, kinesthetically, etc. Using an idea in this way to repattern an action is more effective than trying to persuade or force yourself (or anyone else whom you would wish to influence) to do something.

You just repeat and repeat the desired idea, display to your attention the pleasure and joy of what it is going to be like to realize it, and the mind automatically evokes

desire (eros) in the deep subtle levels of awareness (the "unconscious".)

Doing this also creates a habit of attention and direction of the self.

There is an ancient saying that "the means form around pure intention." The "inner mind" (intention) automatically goes toward the realization of the goal that is set by the pure impulse of intention, and the means for the actualization of this spontaneously form in relation to this and out of this direction. Maxwell Maltz calls this activity of the deep levels of awareness, an automatic "servo-mechanism". You just set the goal and let it happen. There is no need to figure out how it will happen.

This is also referred to as the "law of increase": whatever you put your attention on, grows in you mind and life.

This is the law at work behind rituals, cultural myths, stories and legends and even what we call history. The repetition of an idea tends to perpetuate it and make it grow stronger toward action and actualization.

2. The Law of Reversed Effect (the rule of allowing)

The harder you try to do something the less chance you have of being successful at it. (This is a form of restatement of Alexander's principle of "end-gaining" being counter-productive.)

Variant: when will and idea are in conflict, the idea

will always win. What you intend and project from the deeper, subtler levels of awareness, is what you get. Where the energy is going (directed by the intention) is what gets manifested.

The "unconscious", as Freud found in his investigations, is permissive, allowing, not willful. It is erotic and directed toward pleasure, always seeking a direction toward greater happiness and satisfaction. The conscious mind and will cannot overcome the power and rule of the unconscious but only repress or suppress it, and even then it will always find new and perhaps strange ways to come out into expression. To influence the unconscious you must go with its flow toward happiness, not try and force your way by effort of will.

The classical example of this law in action is to ask someone to try and not think of a pink alligator. Try it. Or, in the case of some problem, such as insomnia, the harder you try to go to sleep the more awake you become. Anyone who has tossed and turned for hours in aggravation and exhaustion knows what this is like. Just when you give up trying to get to sleep and forget your problem is when you find yourself waking up the next morning wondering what happened.

Corollary of this law:

Do not fight or resist a negative or blocking energy or action. Defuse it by allowing it and then releasing it

(opening around it.) Don't fight the negative, direct toward the positive.

Trying not to do something often produces exactly the undesirable results you are trying to stop (such as habits, etc.) But through the application of this law you don't try to do anything about your problems; you stop fighting them and project new creative possibilities and affirm a direction toward new satisfaction. Show your deeper mind something that is more interesting to it - more desirable, more appealing, more attractive - in order to change the direction of the intention. The use of the imagination, especially deep feel-imaging, is particularly effective in this. Get the subtle life-energy feel of what you desire, the energetic felt sense of it as a real experience. Let that work in you, "below the radar" (the censor of the conscious conceptual mind.) Get a sensory memory (a bodily felt sense) of an experience, in detail, putting in all parts of the sense and feel of it. Then get the essential life-energy felt sense of the whole of it - the idea that integrates, unifies, sums up and projects the whole of the experience.

The subtler levels of consciousness are more powerful; the grosser and more outward levels are weaker and less effective. We are working with subtle life-energy in dialectical inquiry. Paying attention to where you are in the energy is a crucial guidepost in the whole practice.

When it comes down to conscious thinking versus the inner life-energy, the life-energy will always rule because it is what sets the first impulse of action which will express and manifest. (The purely dialectical use of this law takes place on the very subtle and discerning level of idea and form - idea and eidos - as we will see in chapter IV.)

3. The Law of Dominant Effect

A strong emotion (charge, energy, desire) will tend to replace a weaker one; and activities associated with the strong emotion, etc. will tend to replace activities associated with the weak one.

The unconscious only understands and responds to feeling, eros, pleasure. These must fill and energize the ideas and directions (intentions) if these are to be truly moving.

So, when you project an idea it must be associated with a strong feeling and desire for it to be effective. True heart-felt deep desire greatly reinforces the idea; it is its animating force, or "soul". Having deep feeling embedded in an idea is not only a way of getting it across to the unconscious in its own language, but is truly the only way of bringing an idea into being and giving it life. Then, manifestation tends to be automatic, going in the direction of the stronger feeling.

4. The Law of Context (Law of Association of Ideas)

It is not so much the task itself but the context (the

structure of ideas associated with one another) in which we see something, that is the determining factor.

How something is perceived and interpreted determines its usefulness and effectiveness as a direction (intention.) We create contexts for ourselves and ways of seeing ourselves, out of association of ideas and the bonding ("cathexis") of energy that goes along with this. Ideas inter-relate to form points of view or perspectives, and this more than any objective determines our attitudes and actions.

We get what we see (Law I) based on and determined by the context in which we see it. We set it all up according to how we link ideas. "It's not what is in the box, it is how you wrap it." Everything that we associate with an object or objective, and not that itself, is what conditions and determines the outcome. For instance, how we link up expectations and consequences and all our unconscious associations with these, colors the whole way in which we approach any action or experience.

How we pattern our association of ideas is a major determinant of intentions (how we are directing our "use of the self.") Change the pattern and you've changed the whole experience. This kind of repatterning of associations in the structuring of experience is a major approach used by the disciplines of reframing.

5. Law of Gradients

Small steps of association gradually linked one to another make transition of states, in idea and energy, effortless.

Absorbed concentration, for instance, can happen effortlessly not through will power or by fixing attention, but by relaxing and then taking a fascinating image or idea and gradually step by step adding more elements of the experience to it.

An example of this is to remember your experience of an orange. First see the color, then smell the orange smell, then see the texture on the surface as you feel it with your fingers. Then imagine yourself opening the orange, feeling, smelling and seeing everything. Then take a piece of it to your lips and taste it, feeling the juice swirl in your mouth, the texture and pressure of chewing, the taste, the whole experience. Really absorb your attention in the whole recollection and get a deep felt sense of the whole of it as if it were present and happening.

This is the kind of absorptive attention that is most effective in repatterning whole complex associations of ideas, gradually step by step. The redirection of the whole pattern comes through successive approximations. You set up gradients of experiencing, creating wholly new patterns of associations bit by bit. As you do this you affirm and

reinforce each step as you go. You pay attention to the subtleties of your new experiencing and acknowledge each new step in a new desired direction, however small. It is the small steps, the small felt shifts, that gradually factor together to make sweeping new directions and whole complex transformations. This way is also the way of easy and effortless transformation which sidesteps the tragic view (and enactment) of life.

In conclusion we can say that in suggestion (projection of ideas), images, verbal (mental) statements, "key words", affirmations, and gestures or postures are ways of accessing the idea. They are not the idea itself but its representative, its representation. These get the attention of the inner mind, the psyche, and hold that attention through attraction, pleasure and repetition.

Dialectic questions and challenges the suggestions that are in and around us, by which we unconsciously live, in limitation, fear and bondage. These suggestions form and are based on faulty "sensory evidence" (false perception) - together creating a total perceptual illusion.

Dialectic clears the way to new creative ideas forming and based on a new undistorted felt sense. Together these form a clear perception, true vision.

Eidetics

Akhter Ahsen [98] discovered that there are two very distinct types of imagery that a person can experience:

1. "mechanistic" imagery, which consists of arbitrarily created fantasy pictures which are products of the conscious mind, have very little connection to the primary bodily processes, and have little or no permanent value in themselves; and
2. "eidetic" imagery (from the classical Greek idein, to see, idea, that which is seen, and eidos, the form or shape of what is seen.) The eidetic image is a basic part of the primary somatic process below the conscious thinking level. It is an image that is vivid, has a vivid feel (felt sense) to it, and a definite (clear or vague) felt meaning - all of these together. It is a vivid complete experience.

Eidetic imagery consists of pictorial image (I), somatic expression (S) and meaning (M). This is what Ahsen calls ISM.

I = image or form (particularly vivid.)

S = somatic response/body sense, with emotions, feelings, kinesthetic sensations, etc.

M = (felt) meaning (the "message", what the whole of it, taken all together, is saying.)

Imagery functions at the core of our perceptual processes and appears in many forms . . . The image avoids the snarl of verbalization and the congested traffic of ideas where one is confused or baffled. The spirit of the image technique involves a positive

acceptance of life reflected in a clear vision where antipathies and polarities are resolved within an ultimate unity. [99]

Many exercises and approaches are used to access and work with the eidetic images. The whole process of Eidetics is through the deep images themselves, allowing new experiencing to spontaneously arise, shift, change and be transformed. In practice, deep mythic levels of the psyche are reached and allowed to play through into conscious awareness. [100] In this there arises a natural dramatic and dialectical action. Imagery dramas are lived through, dialectical oppositions, paradoxes, dilemmas and appositions are met and brought into the play, and deep feeling (eros) is invoked and channeled in and through the transforming images.

"Imagery dramas" carry the work forward in a spontaneous unfolding. The eidetic complex (ISM) is used to reenact and restructure patterns of psycho-physiological responses within the experiencing of the individual, leading to reevaluation and reinterpretation of those responses, and the consequent reorganizing of self. This is done both on the personal emotional relationship level, and (later and deeper) on the primal mythical level.

Eidetics is a way to get into (recollect, anamnesis) the intimacies of relationship, of unconscious erotic/emotional feelings and inner psychic polarities - the stuff of dialectical drama. This is how to get into what

you are to release on and through - the deep substance of that. The eidetic imagery exercises are guides to exploring in detail the original parent/child structuring of the separation perception which creates the walled-off separate ego-self. This exploration is through sensory imaging (perceptual exploration) with specific emotional valences - out of personal, intimate emotional relating situations as contents or themes of exploration. It is a way into exploring the places that really need forgiving, in perceptual/experiential detail and emotional fullness. When and as this is explored in detail, it can be released and forgiven specifically, thoroughly and deeply.

This kind of specific detailed exploration allows you to go into as much detail of actual living experience as is necessary to free up the entire structure for the complete transformation of deep true forgiving leading to surrender into the spirit in unconditional love. The deeper levels of this, in Eidetics, take place in psychic areas that are transpersonal, archetypal and mythic.

"Guided recollection" is the central method of eidetic therapy.[101] Dialectical guided recollection is the method of anamnesis in dialectical practice. Guided recollection is what deepens experiencing into core feelings of the primary intimate relationships which form psyche and direct eros. What Ahsen calls eidetic images (eidos and idea) are feel-images (ISM in Ahsen's formulation), natural

expressions of direct felt-experiencing; not alienated mental images (disconnected fantasy.) An eidetic image is an image that arises from and gives psychic form to a bodily felt sense of meaning. It is the form (eidos) of the felt sense, not a representation; a pre-representational direct cognizing, not a mental picture. It is a whole felt meaning inwardly visioned. It spontaneously flows out of and brings into form, the emergent felt meaning; an imaging directly flowing from the felt sense, implicitly embodying meaning. It is a spontaneously emergent inner vision, presencing a whole pattern of bodily felt meaning in a single gestalt. It is a visionary enactment of a preconceptual gestalt patterning of felt meaning.

The full eidetic form is the same as a complete felt experience (as in Focusing.) Eidetic form is felt-experiencing articulated; felt-experiencing is eidetic form substantiated. They are two perspectives on the same unitary complex of experiencing.

So, eidetic imagery, like imagery in general, can be more powerful with Focusing - getting thereby to the underlying life-energy felt-experiencing that brings it forth.

Also, Focusing can allow the specific dialectic to be brought out more clearly and systematically, as in the dialectic of felt-experiencing in Focusing between body sense, felt sense and felt meaning - in the play of the

total imaging process and experience.

All Dialectic is a zigzagging back and forth between direct felt-experiencing (Focusing) and structures of experiencing (representation, imaging.) This is, then, a short-cut to the resolution of eidetic experiences - the release and opening through Focusing comes through the experience of eidetics. The releasing - ultimately as deep personal forgiving and further as surrendering to divine love - is what we are looking for. This would be a releasing and opening at the deep core level of the being.

Focusing into your sense of self, as you would Focus into your felt sense of a situation, event or other person, is a way into the whole central core of your life. This, as a practice, goes well beyond simple Focusing, into a more fully dialectical moral/spiritual inquiry. "What is your felt sense of self? And how do you construct your representations (communications, expressions, imagings) of it?"

This felt-experiential body image underlies all experience, action, behavior, perceptions and knowing - both subjective and objective reality (which are questionable concepts from this level of experiencing.)

It is the fundamental psychological datum, as Maltz claims, but this is a deeper, richer, fuller and more substantial level than what he calls the self-image in Psycho-cybernetics. It is what allows the deepest, truest,

most direct and most conscious psychological repatterning and life-process integration, as a deep felt-experiential shift that has results.

The primary eidetic self-image is the "unconscious body image" [102] This is equivalent, in Focusing language, to the felt-experiential body image, one's subtle felt sense of self.

This is in contrast to the represented body image (what you think you look like, to yourself or to others, for instance.) The bodily felt sense of self is, like all felt sense, bodily, at first vague and then coming into definition with Focusing, connected definitely to some felt meaning (self, in this case), and unfolds in steps when given focused attention.

The felt-experiential body image (eidetic self-image) is the key and basis of the way we construct our experience and our worlds. Knowing this is a basic component of self-knowing and moral self-mastery, as it unfolds, articulates and images (intends toward expression); it is the primary vehicle for moral experiential choice.

Feldenkrais, Maltz and Gallwey make extensive use of imagery in the methods they have developed, saying that the autonomic nervous system cannot tell the difference between actual experience and an experience that is vividly imagined. It becomes clear from Ahsen's work that what they are talking about is eidetic imagery, or something very

close to it. Gallwey speaks of a "feel-image". This kind of imagery is a natural part of the "primary process" which is the formative and directive element of the energy/feeling sense of self. The substance of the eidetic image is this primary feeling sense of self, which is an energy of action (in eros.) The eidetic image is the self-experiencing of the energetic, biological core of the organism (the soma.) It is part of the core self-image which is the foundation for all self-experiencing, organization of behavior and directions for the use of self. And, this in turn gives new depth of meaning to the "self-image." It is essentially an eidetic image, the most basic eidetic image in the experience of self, which underlies and governs all the ideai (ideas, intentions, directions) which direct the whole organization of self. So, working with eidetic imagery (the ISM complex) is a most basic way of reorganizing and redirecting the use of self.

One of the main activities of Eidetics is to dialectically (interactionally) focus into the primary self-image. Deep psychological repatterning takes place right there, through Focusing type questioning and perspectives going into the felt-experiencing of the life-energy in that. Ahn's Eidetics is a sophisticated, dialectical, precise and critical equivalent to Maltz's Psycho-cybernetics. It is a psycho-cybernetics of a more critical and sound kind - therefore more powerful and precise.

One of the most critical and also dialectical aspects of this eidetic self-imagery psychology is the theory and practical use of "personality multiples", which are a multiplicity of self-images rather than one unique identity. In this view there are a great variety of naturally occurring self-images corresponding to different times, places, situations, feeling-states, etc. There is not one singular self-image which is the same through all experiencing - that is an abstraction and the self-deception we call identity, which is an illusion of the ego-self. Both Eidetics and Dialectic bring the singular self-image fixation into question and relativize it. Creating multiplicities of self-image possibilities and directions is one way of doing this. Dialectic questions and relativizes all fixations and ego fabrications, and this is one of the ego self's primary assumptions. It touches the psychic core and therefore its exploration can have profound transformational consequences.

Another important insight that comes out of Eidetics is that mind is a metaphor (or, the activity of metaphorizing.) What we call mind is not just a linguistic fabrication (as in Gilbert Ryle's Concept of Mind [103]), nor is it literal (there is no such thing as mind.) Rather, what we observe as the activity that we call mind is our natural imaging process of metaphor creation and meaning creation through metaphor. This is a viewpoint on mind that

is used effectively in Ahsen's eidetic therapy work.

Corresponding to this, the realm of psyche is the realm of the imaginal (cf. Hillman), but not the mental fantasy imaginal but the eidetic imaginal, and more specifically the eidetic imaginal in felt-experiencing (with Focusing.) So that the realm of psyche (and of the dialectical nurturing of this) is the realm of eidetic felt-experiencing and dialectical discriminating within this.

There are three important components to be noted here: (1) the critical dialectical act of discriminating, (2) the process of eidetic imaging, and (3) the inner movement of direct felt-experiencing.

Looking to practical purposes, Eidetics also takes in the field developed by NLP, providing a wider context within which to view and use the techniques and approaches to the structures of experience. This wider context can make use of the craft (technai) of NLP and related methods, which tend to be manipulative and sophisticated (in the classical sense of the Sophistry that Socrates made fun of), and reorganize them for use in a true felt-experiential rhetoric guided by the moral/spiritual concerns of Dialectic. Eidetics is a bridge between these crafts of sophisticated experiential manipulation, and the guiding moral principles of Dialectic.

So, Eidetics is a powerful, sophisticated perspective and tool in the exploration of psyche and it contributes

significantly to the development of a functional experiential practice of Dialectic.

Questioning

The Option Process

The Option Process was developed by Barry Neil Kaufman [104] as a simplified Socratic type questioning process. It consists of two basic aspects: 1. lines of questioning and specific questions that probe a person's belief system about his unhappiness (or problem, issue or trouble), and 2. the "Option attitude" of unconditional love and acceptance in the questioning and in all circumstances, stated as "to love is to be happy with..."

The whole process is a thorough investigation into the particular beliefs that accompany and structure personal unhappiness in order to release those beliefs if the person chooses. Certain prescribed lines of questioning using set types of questions lead the person into examining his pattern of unhappiness and how he holds it in his belief system. The questions, although following a prescribed scheme, are always only in response to what the person has just said, so that they are actually used to track the moment-to-moment process and not to impose or manipulate. The process itself, then, determines where the questioning will go and what emerges happens as a spontaneous result of

following the dialogue where it goes.

According to the Option Process all unhappiness is a result of the belief that "something is wrong with me" or some variation on that theme.

All belief systems, including rationalizations, theorizing, conceptualizations, symbolizations of all kinds (all "substitute gratifications for the real gratification of simple self-acceptance and flowing with life and eros), are offshoots of this one belief and the defenses and reaction formations that shield it from awareness. All problems, difficulties, sicknesses, blocks, etc. are forms of basic unhappiness, created and formed by that basic belief. They all lead back to this.

So, all beliefs, opinions, assumptions, presuppositions, thoughts, judgments, etc., can be treated in the same basic, simple way as in the Option Process (possibly with some important specifying elaborations of the Socratic dialectical type to meet the specific form of the particular belief's elaborations.)

This whole area is the realm of what has been called the "internal critic", which is that nagging voice inside us that tells us we are wrong, or no good or can't make it (or whatever.)

All beliefs (including the whole range of "problems" that seemingly stem from them) are defenses against that one basic self-defeating belief, that fundamental inner self-

doubt and personal illusion of insecurity. Challenging any belief, opinion, problem, symptom (or whatever) really leads to that self-image construction and challenges one's self-knowledge so that you begin to discover that you don't really know yourself.

Option questioning is a natural, respectful and loving way to deal with the inner critic who tends to interfere with the Focusing process of inner felt-experiencing; not by rejecting but by acceptance, respect and questioning.

Option shows that the dialectical attitude is not one of criticism, adversary relations, opposition, etc. (although aspects of these may be used as devices in the full Socratic mode of dialoguing), but of loving acceptance.

The Option Process shows an approach of making friends with your "problems" rather than fighting them. Trust the natural process. In doing the Option Process type of dialogue you not only destructure beliefs and belief systems, but you repattern the way in which you have been thinking, etc. that has created fixed and rigid habits of belief and action.

The Option Process is an examination of false perceptions leading into an opportunity to release them. In particular it is an examination of false perceptions of need and want based on faulty mental and emotional demands (similar to Alexander's "improper directions in the use of the self" based on "faulty sensory evidence.") Every

unhappiness, practically speaking, is an instance of wanting to change something, control something or someone, or get approval. Option type questioning allows an inquiry into these general categories, within the language, vocabulary, setting and particular form in which the person actually holds these in his own way (which he may or may not call "wanting to change, control or get approval" but some other word denoting some kind of neediness.)

This method of inquiry honors the particular process of the person and evokes the release and shift on his own terms from within himself. There is no imposition of a method, theory or a vocabulary - only a following the questioning where it leads.

In going through the inquiry in the Option Process we discover that we don't have to do anything to be happy. Only unhappiness creates doing (in the sense of trying, efforting, "end-gaining"), which is an effort to improve on the natural flow of life, and this is always self-defeating. Just being, just accepting and allowing, is to be naturally happy. When you let go of (release) judging and blaming and forming concepts and beliefs, you naturally and automatically shift to the love and acceptance and happiness that is already there in you. When you release, that is what you find.

This releasing into prior natural inner happiness is the implicit heart of the Option Process, and further, of

Dialectic. It is the heart of the transformation (metanoia) which is the felt shift to life in the divine (theos) and to soul-life (psyche.)

In Releasing you maintain your desire and intention (or discover it) while letting go of your wishful thinking and needing. Similarly, in the Option Process you clear away and let go of the beliefs that form the self-illusions and neediness that hold these in place, while allowing your true desires and intentions to open out and flow.

One of the main results of the Option Process is to make the felt shift from limiting beliefs to natural desire (eros, according to nature, physis.) The felt shift to "being happy with . . . " comes from the question (the inquiry into): "Could you let go of wanting to change or control . . . (whatever)?" This is a Releasing question that goes right into the territory of the Option Process. This shows their interrelation on the higher, dialectical level where all the repatterning methods come together as one moral/spiritual discipline.

With this question you are just asking if you can let go of an attitude in your awareness (the emotional attachment of wanting to change or control something.)

The whole aim of the Option Process (and of Dialectic) is to bring about the natural attitude of unconditional love and acceptance. This is the highest and truest eros that Dialectic talks about. Then, from this, what are the

consequences? You have to be living your life totally differently, from new possibilities never allowed before, from the attitude and experience of happiness rather than of suffering and limitation. This is the simplicity and naturalness of transformation through dialectical inquiry.

The Option Process asks, How do you learn or teach love and acceptance, or happiness? The work itself is the answer: by questioning the beliefs of unhappiness, and following that questioning where it leads.

The Option Process attitude of "to love is to be happy with . . ." [105] means total acceptance without conditions, judgments or expectations - of all behavior, all appearances, of everything. This is the condition and the atmosphere that naturally brings about trust, the beginning of true dialogue in loving relationship. Acceptance and trust naturally lead to the specifically dialectical attitude of following the questioning where it leads, trusting in the lead of the dialogue. The Option Process brings out one of the most essential parts of Socratic dialogue - the love, acceptance and trust within the real human relationship. This is first imparted by the teacher, then later received by the student as his own. Love and acceptance is the heart and truth of all releasing, shifting and opening. It is both the necessary and the sufficient condition for these. This opening is what allows further natural steps of change, i.e. further opening, further

expansion of happiness. Releasing, shifting and opening are acts of expansion of happiness.

"To love and accept is to be happy with . . ." and this just naturally releases all holding, or conditioning, qualifications, limitations, etc., or whatever may be blocking life's flow. To love and accept is to release whatever you may be unhappy with in any way. This act of acceptance/releasing is all that is really needed. All the rest of the dialectical and repatterning methods are just ways of communicating this. Loving and accepting what is there starts you moving in the flow, without the resistance of unhappiness.

Love and acceptance of self is the primary release and opening. It is releasing and opening at the core. All other forms of releasing follow from this.

This attitude also means "a willingness to accept in order to see." [106]

When you destructure the beliefs and concepts that create unhappiness the Option Process attitude naturally develops. [107]

The way to be happy now is total acceptance of self, of everything, without beliefs, judgments, conditions or expectations, not expecting things to be any way other than they are. In this total acceptance you allow your natural desires and purposes to flow with ease rather than against resistances and limitations.

The attitude is that whatever is happening, whatever you are doing, wherever you are, is OK. Love yourself, be happy with yourself, your situation, your behavior, etc, whatever it is. This is the natural condition for effortless, easy, pleasurable change through the flow of natural desire and life (the flow of eros.) All natural repatterning takes place within this attitude of total acceptance. It alone allows flow with the natural process (physis.) The Option attitude is the fundamental necessary attitude of all repatterning disciplines.

There is nothing to overcome or to fix or to correct. But there are desires, feelings, spirit and energy to express, and these are the real force of learning and growth when the limiting beliefs and defenses have been cleared away.

The Option Process scheme of questioning is as follows:

"What are you unhappy about?"

"What about that makes you unhappy?"

"What about 'all that' is so ... (upsetting, frightening, etc.)?"

"Why are you unhappy about that?"

"Do you believe that?"

"Why do you believe that?"

Clarifying questions:

"What do you mean?" "What do you mean by that?"

"What are you feeling?"

In considering these questions, don't answer quickly, from thought or what you already know. Take time to go within yourself, do steps of Focusing, and let the answers come from within as a natural unfolding.

Supplemental questions are:

"What are you afraid would happen if you weren't unhappy about that?"

"What do you want?" [108]

In practice this is a movement from the "what" of it ("all of that" as in Focusing) to reasons for it, to the most basic belief that these reasons support:

1. The "what" of it:

"What are you (so) upset about?"

or, "What are you unhappy about?"

2. The reasons:

"What about that makes you feel upset, feel the way you do, feel unhappy?"

Or, "What about all that is so ...(upsetting, frightening, or whatever the person has called it)?"

Clarifying questions might be: "What do you mean?"

"What do you mean by that?" "What are you feeling?" etc.

3. The basic belief:

"Why are you upset (unhappy) about that?"

Supplementary question: "What are you afraid might happen if you weren't unhappy about that?"

4. Questioning the belief:

"Do you (really) believe that?"

Then (if so): "Why do you believe that?"

5. Choice:

"What do you (really) want?"

The whole procedure is to get at the what, find the reasons, go for the belief behind the reasons, then question the belief leading to a significant moment of choice.

Total trust is put in the questioning and the process, so that what emerges is always spontaneously right and from the truthfulness of unqualified love. It is totally open-ended, like life itself, and is a surrendering into that greater beingness which Dialectic also honors.

Self-knowledge Inquiry

Gerald Weinstein and associates at the School of Education at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, partly influenced and inspired by Socratic questioning, developed what they call "self-knowledge education." One central aspect of this is facilitated by a process of asking questions to evoke levels of experiencing at various stages.

[109]

The levels are:

1. Elemental: the person describes experience through external events, things going on outside himself, elements which can be seen, touched, heard or what can be observed.

Questions to get at this level might be:

"What's happening?" "What's going on?" "What are you doing?" "Can you describe what you see, hear, say, do, etc.?"

2. Situational: here there appears a more organized description of one event. The arena described remains primarily external but what is added are elementary descriptions of inner experiences such as thoughts and feelings. At this level a person reports a single event and refers to it as a whole. There is no attempt to relate or connect the particular situation to other situations. Rudimentary causation is introduced, by such words as: because, so, when, in order to, so that, although, but, etc.

Questions at this level might be:

"What's your reaction to that?" "What are you feeling about that?" "What happens (or what do you do) when that happens?" "What do you feel when that happens?"

3. Internal Pattern: persons describe internal responses that are consistent across situations. No longer is the self embedded in a particular event as in the previous level but one now begins to describe that "I-ness" as something stable across events. We get a class of internal responses to a class of situations. Internal responses are emotional, mental (thoughts), dispositional and attitudinal rather than behavioral. They are mostly expressed in terms of personality traits and characteristics. This is

distinguished from descriptions of behavioral patterns which we regard as external responses.

Questions here might be:

"What do you usually do, feel or experience when that happens?" "How does your response to this situation remind you of responses in similar situations?" "What kind of situations make you think or feel this way?"

4. Process: persons at this level go beyond describing patterns of internal responses to demonstrate an awareness of how they deal with or negotiate their internal states. They describe the process by which they control, monitor, and modify their feelings, moods and thoughts. The awareness of how "self directs self" is explicit. Self is seen as proactive in influencing internal states.

Questions:

"What do you (or could you) do inside yourself about that feeling (or response) when you have it?" "What could you say to yourself that would change, alter or interrupt what you are feeling or thinking?" "How do your beliefs about yourself affect your attitude?"

The Weinstein self-knowledge questions can be seen as questions that inquire into experiential signification, translated from particular specific representations to the action categories of the storying process. There are four traditional modes of signification; correspondingly there are four storying categories. These questions basically go

into exploring the patterns of how we represent our experience in order to communicate it. They are the patterns of our modes of communication.

There are many more possible questions within each level. The above are merely representative.

Parallel to this way of questioning into experience is a scheme of levels of experiencing developed by Eugene Gendlin, the originator of Focusing, which he calls the experiencing scale. [110] This is a research model for determining a person's level and depth of direct experiential reference in his communicating, ranging from detached reporting to aware self-experiencing. This model has seven levels, and pertinent questions similar to those used in self-knowledge education can be added in order to transform the scheme into an evocative instrument of self-knowledge inquiry rather than merely a research instrument. It thereby becomes, through the questioning, a way of deepening the activity of felt-experiencing.

The following are the stages with representative questions which move into them:

Stage 1

At this stage the person seems remote from his feelings. There seems to be no personal involvement and experiences are just reported.

Questions:

"What happened?"

Stage 2

At this stage some self-reference begins. Feelings and personal reactions are referred to indirectly or abstractly as if they were external events and the person seems to have only an intellectual and superficial involvement with them.

Questions:

"What did you do?" "How were you involved?"

Stage 3

The person refers to feelings and his part in them but as if they were rooted in external circumstances. They are described in a very limited way, avoiding personal and deeper ramifications.

Questions at this stage might be:

"What was your reaction to that?" "What did you feel?"

"What was your response to that?"

Stage 4

At this stage the quality of involvement with direct experiencing becomes deeper. The person is no longer remote from his feelings and responses but draws directly from his felt-experiencing in communicating. It is at this stage that Focusing begins. Here the person attends to and stays with a direct inner referent for his experiencing and makes this the basis for his speaking. He is no longer primarily looking at outside events and stewing about things but is being quiet and letting the bodily felt sense of the whole experience emerge into his awareness. Felt meaning comes

through and words come out of that.

Questions to evoke this level might be:

"What was it like to experience that (in that way)?"

"What was it like to feel so ... (whatever)?"

"What's your sense of all that?" "What is all that?"

What's the quality of it?"

"What was it like to react that way?"

Stage 5

At this stage the inner felt-experiencing itself is the primary referent for exploration and communication. The person can now focus on the (at first) vague whole sense of the experiencing and let this unfold. There is often the sense that there is more there than is being reached or known at the moment and that new feelings could come through.

Questions could be:

"What is it about this experience of yours that makes you feel the way you do (or that moves you the way it does)?"

"What is it about all of that, that makes you so... (whatever)?"

"What's the meaning of all that?"

Stage 6

At this stage the feeling sense moves, releases, shifts (the felt shift.) Previously unclear or fragmentary experiences resolve into an unity (an idea, in the language

of Dialectic) so that their experiential effect, their meaning and their impact become clear. Through this shift and resolution feelings and personal felt meaning become immediately available as referents for action and self-awareness ("directions for the use of the self.")

Questions:

"What's the crux (or essence) of all that?" "What's the main thing about it?"

"Now, what does all of this have to say?" "What is all of this telling you?"

"Where is all this going?" "What needs to happen?"

Stage 7

The inner felt-experiencing is now trusted as a reliable source of self-awareness, and is steadily used as a primary referent for thought, action and direction of the self. There is constant feedback from new felt-experiencing and adjustments are regularly and reliably made according to felt shifts and unfolding new meaning. The experiencing has become coherent and integrated while being flexible and open at the same time.

Questions at this stage:

"How can you carry this further?" "What do you need to do inside yourself for further unfoldment?"

"What do you want in all this?"

The next chapter will be an attempt to bring together all the important elements of functional experiential

learning in terms of a dialectical understanding of their uses, so that we may have a clear idea of the specific dialectical method of functional learning. The purpose will be to present and elucidate the fundamental experiential defining act of the dialectical drama which is the truest guide for the proper moral/spiritual use of the dialectical reframing of the functional learning disciplines, and thereby also the truest guide for the use of Socratic questioning. We will then be in a position to see how we can begin to bring Dialectic into practice.

C H A P T E R I V

DIALECTIC AS EXPERIENTIAL FUNCTIONAL METHOD (Paideia)

Fundamental Experiential Choice

Dialectic, viewed from an educational and functional perspective, is concerned with the deeply felt needs, desires and wants of human natural functioning, and their integration through guiding ideas, directions and intents into effective action. Dialectic aims at the dynamic, action-oriented, moral, purposive dimension in human life, that part which is the inwardly felt impulse for the initiation of an action (its telos, purpose.) It seeks to bring out this essential purpose as the moral guiding force of the whole experiencing process.

When applied to the disciplines of somatic functional learning, this perspective on Socratic Dialectic can clarify and bring out such a dimension in them. This dimension then becomes the unifying and directing principle of the functional dialectical method, just as the purposive dimension is central in the total human process. The moral, purposive dimension thus becomes primary, and the somatic, functional method becomes clearly defined and used as a means to serve this end.

This clarification of purpose is simply the equivalent of putting the specifically human concerns of living as the

first priority. Integrating action and function, as in the somatic functional disciplines, follows and serves this priority.

What I most want to bring out in this chapter is that the central act of dialectical functional learning is a deep, fundamental felt-experiential act of choice. This is a felt shift that happens in the subtle feeling life-energy (i.e. eros) through the examination of desire and the subsequent choice for what is morally good; and that ideas (ideai, in the specifically dialectical functional sense, which will come out more clearly as we go along) are the pivotal points of focus and the essential instruments for that shift. This central act of moral choice is what acts most truly as a guiding principle for the course and flow of the dialectical process, and more particularly for the right use of Socratic questioning (which we will explore in a later section of this chapter.)

After presenting a perspective on just what dialectical moral choice is, I will then give a detailed examination of the structure and movement of deep experiential moral choice as it operates in dialectical inquiry. This will not yet be the actual practice of Dialectic, but it will show the form of its essential act (the act of fundamental experiential choice.) I will then give some short expositions in order to functionally define some key terms from Plato. This will show the essentially

functional, experiential nature of Plato's language (logos) of Dialectic, and prepare the way for understanding how this ancient art may be enacted today (which is the subject of the following section.)

Moral Choice

Fundamental experiential choice is a felt shift, through which the potential for directing action is explicitly brought out. This choice is the transformational power of functional learning, and it is what we are especially trying to evoke and awaken through dialectical inquiry.

Therefore, I will now elaborate on fundamental experiential choice. It is central to Dialectic and to functional learning, and it is the basis for the learning process described in the next section of this chapter. I will also discuss the link between Dialectic, functional learning, and fundamental experiential choice.

We are always giving "directions for the use of the self" to ourselves. These directions are in the form of messages and images that we play to ourselves as cues for habitual responses. We construct these cues in our own peculiar ways (internal communication.) They may be simple or they can be complex (such as some combination or sequence of visual, auditory and kinesthetic representations.)

These cues direct our life-energy, giving it structure

and directing our actions. Our felt sense responds to these cues. Repatterning the cues can affect our felt sense, but what is most important is that the felt sense be allowed to shift. That felt shift is what redirects and requalifies the life-energy.

Gendlin's Focusing defines and teaches the specific act of experiential change, which is what he calls the "experiential effect" of the felt shift. If you can access and identify the felt-experiencing of something as it occurs in your body, you can create an "organic instruction" to recall it, amplify it, diminish it or inhibit it. [111]

Choice of attention is necessary for experiencing the felt shift. It is important because what you put your attention to is what you create in your life, in spite of anything you will or believe or think.

Unless you are aware of where and how you place your attention, and know you are responsible for this, you are unconsciously run by conditioned habits (where your attention has been entranced, hypnotized, magnetized by conditioning.)

The choice is that of giving attention to the felt shift and consciously using this experience to instruct and direct yourself. Such an experience, in fact, is the entire basis for the transformational shift that takes place in Dialectic, because the specific felt shift that occurs is a shift to the idea of what you truly want in your deep self-

experiencing. Such a shift is the essential, spontaneous movement that liberates bound energy for greater presence, love, power, aliveness and awareness. It happens naturally because it contains a compelling pleasurable sense of ease, release and opening. There is a kind of directly sensed experiential dropping into relaxation, aliveness and refreshment, which contrasts to the former state of dissonant tension. The new state impels action and supports more vivid and lively experiencing, for new, creative action. (This kind of choice, in fact, is always creative, since it is always depatterning and opening into new possibilities.)

Experiential choice, then, is a simple movement of experiencing toward its intentions. By focusing into the life-energy, giving it attention and affirming it, you experience a certain level of awareness (a felt shift.) You open to that shift and experience it as a matter of choice, freely giving attention to the shift of attention and to the ideai inherent to the experience. The felt shift, as it is emerging into new felt meaning (as it naturally tends to do), is actively chosen as the basis for a "new direction for the use of the self", and not merely passively undergone as in Focusing. The opening consists of both the deepening felt-experiencing of current reality, and deeply felt, emerging vision of your true desire, from the core of your being. These together "lengthen" you psychically (as

Alexander's technique lengthens you somatically.) They create the grounded and deep structural tension that releases, opens and transforms energy into entirely new patterns and directions. What is operating in all this is a depth psychological structural creative tension.

Many aspects of Dialectic and of functional learning utilize fundamental experiential choice.

Imaging is one example: when you project an idea, it goes through your whole energy field as a psychic life-energy form (eidos.) This form is the fundamental direction for the creation of your experience, perception and action. This is happening whether you are consciously aware of it or not. You are thus creating your experience all the time even if you are not conscious of doing it or how you are doing it.

Fundamental experiential choice is the central act of repatterning. Repatterning occurs through felt shifts that move through and effect the various structures of experiencing that give representation (image) to the basic felt-experiencing. It is choice of attention that is the real key to patterning and repatterning. This is what all methods and techniques of repatterning (whether body movement, mental, psychological or emotional) work with, mostly implicitly.

However, the experiential repatterning of Dialectic adds a significant element of precision, specificity and

effectiveness to the act of fundamental experiential choice, while maintaining the process' rootedness in ongoing felt-experiencing. How this is accomplished will be discussed next.

The dialectical use of felt-experiencing is not merely somatic and organic, but goes beyond this to the deep feeling core of human moral choices. The Socratic inquiry suggests the following: the "problems" of life are moral, i.e. they all stem from misdirection of self, and this is what needs investigation, not the problem itself. By entering into the dialectical process you discover that you are responsible for your actions and your experiencing. By becoming conscious of this responsibility you can redirect and master your experience, perception, action and your life. This is what Socratic moral responsibility is, as investigated, remembered, and actualized in Dialectic. It is the purification of truth from illusory self-images, rather than the getting rid of a problem. The problem, if there is one, is in the misperception and resulting misdirection of self.

This new way of being is the basis for a wholly new type of action, expression and relationship to the whole situation. Dialectic's purpose is not to cure, fix, heal, ameliorate or indulge suffering (pathos.) Nor is it to identify suffering as a problem against which to apply a solution. Dialectic's purpose is to precisely examine suffering

through the process of felt-experiential inquiry. Through this process, the sufferer can see what he is doing, and can then release himself from the suffering he is creating, into greater freedom.

So, a primary aim of Dialectic is to evoke this awakening of self to its directing activity. This is done, as a practice and method, simply by exploring this whole territory in a full dialectical interplay, and following the experiencing where it leads. The exploration brings awareness to that territory of self, and this is a recollection (anamnesis) and an awakening. To come alive to that self-referal directing activity of soul (psyche) is the soul's distinctive moral power (its specific arete.)

The practice of Dialectic is fundamentally the practice of subtle discriminating during the act of experiencing. This is the same discernment of choice used when experiencing a felt shift. But the central act of Dialectic is an act of choice in the "use of the self." Through Dialectic we guide our deeply felt needs, impulses and desires (eros) into integrated, proper use, to attain natural happiness.

It is important to discuss how Dialectic achieves such discrimination. Knowing what you are doing (through self-reflection on your current reality and perception of how you are directing yourself), is the basis for what Alexander called "inhibition" of that doing. It is not inhibition in

the sense of forcibly stopping action. It is simply taking a look at what you have been doing. That vision creates distance from the action, thereby taking you out of automatic immersion in the action. Conditioning is therefore no longer a determining and compulsive force because you have stepped back to see for the first time what you have been doing.

This seeing is not enough in itself, though. Once you have reached the point of suspension (aporia) of your current actions, you have opened a space for the creation and projection of new directions for new action, based on the discovery and expression of what you truly desire (your idea of the good, for you, and of what you want to create in your life.)

The creation of these new directions for the use of the self, within the fertile space of the suspension of your previous habits of action, sets up a natural dynamic (dialectical) tension impelling you toward the desire-filled new vision or idea. Energy is attracted to flow through and in this new idea as a path of least resistance (which is a fundamental principle of all natural functioning, called the "law of least action.") The direction of this dynamic tension is toward release, ease, opening and fulfillment of desire, away from resistance, pain, holding, unfruitful "wrong doing" that has no real charm. The new creative idea actually becomes much more charming to awareness as a new

natural direction for the whole self, thereby making its use and implementation probable and almost inevitable.

This approach (as in all repatterning, but fully and explicitly realized in Dialectic) completely eliminates the need or the desirability of working with "problems". The problems and concerns of life are looked at as current perceptions of reality, and through self-reflection brought to a state of suspension (every good drama has suspense at its pivotal central core, and Dialectic is high drama.) In this suspension new creative ideas can powerfully and quite naturally redirect all the energies, forces and aspects of the self.

Dialectic, then, uses movement in, around, and through a felt shift and release. Dialectic's process is a basic act of transformation, leveraging into it from varied angles, perspectives and approaches, but always following the energy of opening where it leads. There is no need for any elaboration beyond this natural movement of dialogue around the felt shift, because the felt shift experienced through Dialectic is transformation.

To be guided in dialogue by attentiveness to felt-experiencing and to the felt shift follows one of the main guiding principles of Plato's Dialectic: to always be guided by the logos (the articulation of the idea through "true speech.")

This principle corresponds to the other main principle

of Dialectic, which is to always be guided by the energy of eros, the deep-feeling desire for wholeness, union and communion in transcendent love.

These two laws correspond to the two primary factors that create the right atmosphere for the activity of fundamental experiential choice: 1. the dynamics of attention to the felt shift (with questioning, perspectives and various other approaches serving this attentiveness), and 2. the energy relationship in presence, love and awareness.

To summarize, fundamental experiential choice is the middle way between the misdirections of action that either aimlessly let things happen, or try to force them to happen. The functional learning disciplines, guided by Dialectic, use the act of fundamental experiential choice to achieve a liberating transformation of self. This is accomplished by experiencing a felt sense of what you have been doing, letting that felt sense shift in your experiencing, and then choosing what emerges from that shift.

This shift is not to another way of doing what you were doing (that was wrong doing, perhaps with a wrong aim), but to an entirely other way of being with and in the whole situation. This is a release of "end-gaining" and a shift to "process", to whole-body heart-felt intuitive knowing.

This discriminating is carried on through a process similar to Focusing. Focusing uses such acts as "checking,"

"fitting", etc. in the play of outward life-action to relate those actions back to inward felt sensing. The criteria for the "fit" is the direct feeling sense of eros and the discernment of telos.

In terms of practice, what happens is that you do something, and then check back. Does it really give a felt sense of completion, of rightness? Does it satisfy the desired aim that you intended? Feel it, test it. Then adjust, go through the process again, act and check back, feel and adjust. Discriminate as you go along.

Reach into that quiet inward sensing place to the felt sense of shift and opening. Let it be, let it happen in itself. Give it attention while it moves and opens up. Recognize it, affirm it, choose it as a "direction" to set in motion your thoughts, feelings and action.

Stay with that feeling sense and its outward connection into use and expression. Let it follow through into action and expression.

Stay centered in the fundamental choice as you act outwardly. You choose the whole experience in your active open attention to it from the place of the felt sense; but you don't do anything to make it happen. Action starts from and inevitably flows out from the place of choice.

The Art of Choosing

As seen in the preceding pages, Dialectic defines and teaches a specific act of existential/experiential learning, which is what we called fundamental experiential choice. That choice is the central core of all organic functional learning. Dialectic brings out functional learning's moral and spiritual potential, and its central human feeling concern. As such, it is both broader in scope and more specific in intent than any of the functional disciplines described in chapter III. Those disciplines are useful for seeing the experiential characteristics of functional learning but they do not in themselves delineate the dialectical mode of functional learning, for although there is dialectic in these methods, it is not recognized, articulated or used as such.

To get a clear picture of dialectical method, we must view the functional learning disciplines in terms of dialectical intent, and see how that intent can be brought into action through their specific functional methods. Also, the disciplines must be used in subordination to the main guiding principle of the specific type of learning being developed here. That principle is the desire to bring the inner, somatic feeling core into living expression through actions that apply in the real, outer environment, for the realization of happiness. This desire must be clearly kept in mind in the directing of the learning

process. It calls for a skillful coordination of awareness, life-energy (eros, desires, intents), structure (organization for action), and expression. The whole range of this complex of acting/experiencing must be brought into play in every act of learning.

I will now present a detailed and specific account of the central act of dialectical learning, embodying fundamental experiential choice. To accomplish this I have synthesized the earlier analysis of dialectical action in Plato provided by the functional interpretation, [112] with the details of the experiential practice used in those various disciplines.

The main source for the following view of Socratic dialectical action is found in Plato's Alcibiades Major. [113] This dialogue presents a very clear picture of the levels and sequencing of dialectical learning, up to a certain point. In it we find the intellectual questioning, the rhetorical story-making, the somatic feeling level, the concern for the soul (psyche) and its proper moral purposes, and a good picture of the nature of the dialectical interchange between teacher and student. So, although other dialogues present other central elements of dialectical learning, this one serves as a model for central themes of the actual process. We will draw upon other Dialogues for a more complete picture.

Through integrating all of the above, I will reframe

the whole process to fit the aims, style and dynamics of the Socratic method of Dialectic.

The reframing in terms of Socratic Dialectic is the crucial step that distinguishes the common usage of the functional learning disciplines from their dialectical use. As discussed earlier, there is a very specific moral purpose in the Socratic inquiry that can be seen implicitly or as a possibility in these other disciplines, but which has not up until now been explicated and is hardly ever used in practice, because it is not seen clearly. Bringing out the Socratic purpose inherent in these disciplines can transform them, reshaping how they are thought of and used. When related to a wholly new purpose, their use gets reorganized around that purpose, and thus their character changes. They become instruments of Dialectic, and at the same time, dialectical philosophy is enriched by their injection into its flow. The result will be a reshaping both of Dialectic as it has been understood, and of functional experiential learning, leading to a method of dialectical learning that is both entirely new and also a fair approximation to Plato's ancient art.

I will use this reshaping to suggest a procedure for doing Dialectic. Through this doing, the nature of Dialectic, of psyche, and of the moral purpose of functional learning can be discerned.

The morality of Socratic inquiry, itself, is not a

morality of conventional standards of action, but a dialectical morality. In fact, dialectical questioning produces a state of moral tension in relation to the accepted conventions of society. For example, in his trial, Socrates was accused of undermining the morality of the young men of Athens and sacrileging the gods. Perhaps this was because dialectical inquiry questions everything and every standard not rooted in the primary process of felt-experiencing. It is a morality of self-knowing and of discerning what is good for the soul. This is very explicit in Plato's Dialogues.

We can give this kind of deep moral investigation meaning only by examining the actual practice of dialectical learning in which it is necessarily embedded. And since Dialectic is a dynamic process, we can see its morality only in its action, for there can be no adequate conceptual definition of Dialectic, of psyche, or of the soul's moral purpose, since all of these are found only in the actions proper to them. The action proper to the soul, then, is dialectical in nature, and the nature of dialectical action, in turn, can only be found by examining the dynamics of soul. This means that soul and Dialectic mutually determine each other in the act of dialectical learning, and only in this act of learning can the moral purpose of the whole process be seen.

To present this new formulation of dialectical method,

I will put the whole process in the shape of a sequence of steps in which the repatterning can be clearly seen. The content of the method will be filled into the sequence of steps, and comes from all the methods we have looked at, synthesized to form one coherent whole. Along the way, various key ideas and methods will be reinterpreted as an interplay between Plato's terms and actual functioning elements from the learning disciplines, so that new understanding of the process emerges. At this point there will be no attempt to identify the source of any one procedure. We will stay with trying to give a fairly complete picture of the whole.

What follows is not meant to be a set of instructions for a technique. Dialectic is an art and not a technology. The act of fundamental experiential choice, like any natural process, cannot be adequately analyzed or codified. It can, however, be used creatively and consciously. The following are ideas (ideai) for directing the use of the self in the central action of dialectical learning.

It should also be born in mind that we are talking about a process that is subtle, experiential, and counter to the usual, conventional ways of thinking. Because of this, the description of the practice can only give a suggestion of what it is like. I make no claim that this an analysis or interpretation of a situation I have observed or of a text in Plato that I have read. It is rather a detailed

presentation of an idea of what the central action of Dialectic is and how it works. You can't understand it without actually experiencing it, but the idea forms and directs the experiencing. Therefore, what follows will be a direction into the process.

The remainder of this section will describe each of the steps of dialectical learning method in detail. As an initial overview, however, the steps are:

I. Start with existing behavior. See what you are doing.

II. Get a "felt sense" of the need or desire that motivates the action.

III. Distinguish between the intention and what you have been doing.

IV. Get a clear idea of what you truly want to do.

V. Follow the idea into action.

VI. Experience the results in actual performance.

I. Start with existing behavior. See what you are doing.

In the natural learning process there are several levels of relaxed concentration or mindfulness in action. This first step of the dialectical process establishes the first level, which is one of simple attention to what is. There are deeper levels of attention and involvement in the learning and that is where subsequent steps lead.

Two components comprise step I: A. Establishing a setting of safety and trust, and B. Focusing on what is actually happening.

A. Establishing a setting of safety and trust.

When beginning the process of Dialectic, it is important to first establish a setting of relaxation, safety and trust. This allows the student to let down into open-focus awareness, the absorptive attention necessary for the learning process. Within such a setting the student can suspend judgment, self-doubt, self-criticism and usual ways of feeling and thinking, to clear away beliefs, opinions, etc. that get in the way of the learning process. Feelings of self-acceptance and self-love are substituted.

The above enables the student to slow down, attend to and experience what is actually happening. He is thereby not trying to change but to simply become aware of his doing.

To support this, Dialectic begins by establishing a close relationship between the teacher and the student. The first step in the dialectical process, that the teacher establish a setting of trust and safety, is facilitated by the attitude of the teacher toward the student.

The teacher is there to guide the student in his learning process. He keeps the experiencing to its purpose and direction, acts as a living biofeedback circuit, giving experiential feedback and direct somatic guidance (analogous

to what the teacher does in Alexander or Feldenkrais repatterning), teaches the student specific skills to use in the process (such as Focusing or Releasing), and helps the student recognize and utilize the subtle experiential felt shift that is at the heart of the learning process.

The interaction is an intimate personal relationship of friendship where real human contact, love and trust create a safe setting in which the student can let down his usual holding patterns, his habitual conscious direction and control, in order to comfortably and easily relax into the deep-feeling unconscious dimension of the learning process from which real transformation can take place. The student learns to trust and listen to the unconscious (the primary somatic process) by trusting one who already knows the territory. Both teacher and student, therefore, become vitally engaged in discovery, play and unfoldment.

Also, the student will have confidence in the teacher because the teacher displays mastery (arete) in the use of the self and skill in action. The student is attracted to the human excellence of the teacher and is able to feel comfortable in putting faith in him. The teacher's steady, relaxed concentration in the performance of action and teaching, and his centeredness in himself (sophrosyne) therefore contribute to establishing the proper atmosphere for dialectical learning.

At this stage, the teacher is gentle with the student.

He makes sure that the learning situation is one of ease and pleasure so that the student can perform his usual actions without pressure or end-gaining, and so learn to trust the natural non-doing process of action and learning.

Practicing without pressure allows the action to become playful and light and the response of awareness to be broad and flexible. The conditions for the performance of an action are changed from being deadly serious and effortful to being more of a game (a simulated action with no serious consequences, and with pleasure as a main objective.) This change of conditions brings about a change of attitude, or it at least sets the stage for this to happen. The student is able to take on the attitude of "what if": "what might happen if I did this rather than that?" This opens up the first beginnings of the possibility of that change in the structure of experiencing that is the nature of dialectical learning.

B. Focusing on what is actually happening.

From setting the conditions for the process, we move on to actively establishing a state of relaxed concentration. The place to start, and the content to use, is some specific action or activity that the student is already doing as part of his life. All human concerns involve a person in some form of doing, whether that be academic, recreational, social, intellectual, emotional or sexual. The doing is a somatic process that engages the

whole being. It has an energy and a direction, an expressive quality, a feeling component, a sensory-motor configuration, and an underlying, guiding purpose. Not all of these may be apparent to conscious awareness but they can all be accessed in one way or another and brought into the play of the reorganizational process by letting the action happen and following it where it leads.

In the dialectical process this is done in a series of steps:

1. Habits, beliefs, images and end-gaining are usually so much a part of the student's routine of living as to be quite unconscious; they are "second nature." In order to let go of these set behavior patterns, the student has to become aware of them. Within the setting of love, trust and safety that has been established in the learning relationship, the teacher starts to destroy the student's socially conditioned self-image. He arouses in the student a sense of dis-grace (a feeling awareness of not being graceful in his doing), based on his inadequate self-knowing. A real bodily awareness of the lack of psycho-physical and emotional integration becomes evident. The student begins to see experientially that he doesn't know himself, doesn't know what he is doing, and that because of this ignorance he is a wrong-doer.

The teacher helps the student become aware by directing his attention during action. The student sees

that his usual ways of thinking and feeling are interfering with his actions; that his incorrect conceptions and inadequate "sensory appreciation" (somatic perception) are misdirecting him, that his incomplete or distorted self-perception (self-image) causes him to mistake his goals and be ungraceful in his performance; that his action is wrongdoing, improper use of the self.

This experience leaves the student in a state of suspension (aporia) that is ripe for the necessary shift of attention to effortless concentration in action. He is bewildered or confused about his ordinary ways of thinking and feeling, which no longer serve him. The feeling sense of his dis-grace (which may be a bodily sense of tension or uneasiness) and his mental confusion compel him to seek a re-ordering of his experiencing and acting to make things right. This naturally induces a state of eased attention invested with feeling that impels the student onward to discover if and in what way he may use himself better.

2. Even though he is challenging and destroying the student's conditioned self-image, the teacher is still gentle with the student. This is because it is crucial that the student continue suspending judgment in order to focus on what is actually happening. "Self-judgment distorts perception, interferes with performance and retards our abilities to learn." [114] Also, since the student is being asked to let go of his usual ways and enter into unfamiliar

territory, a natural fear of the loss of the familiar ways could lead the student to retreat into defenses and resistances to the process. So, the teacher does not ask the student to change anything he has been doing, but to simply observe his existing behavior without judgment.

There are a few points here:

a. Non-judgmental awareness means seeing events as they are, without adding or taking away anything from them, without assigning positive or negative value to them. One way to cultivate this skill is to substitute descriptive words (and awareness) for evaluative ones. The most effective way is to practice seeing and letting go of judgments while in action, as you bring your attention into present experiencing. When the student is able to accept everything within his experiencing, including what may seem to be uncomfortable, without censoring or labeling, his experience will start to change and will lead to a greater and more open awareness.

b. The student must be led to let go of judging himself, his performance or the learning process. As a natural outgrowth of the environment set by the teacher, the student is asked to not engage in such judging but instead to allow his attention to be open to new experiencing. The only task is to just see what happens and to experience it without interfering. The new attitude of awareness is a very significant shift in itself and naturally brings about

a real change in the experiencing and hence in the action. This is the first encounter that the student may have with the effortlessness of the natural learning process.

c. The teacher, by his own centeredness in the process, helps the student to relax his judging mind and come to an emotional acceptance of just what is. (Remember that "what is" at this point is a felt sense of dis-grace.)

d. The student is guided to get a body sense of his present experiencing. He is asked to direct his attention toward his body. He learns to feel and know exactly what his body is doing. Paying close attention to the subtleties and details of such experiencing makes the learning fascinating and pleasurable in itself, and puts the student again directly into his own process, rather than being an observer or judge. The mental and physical processes start to merge and he develops a "non-observational body-sense," [115] which is a deepening, more authentic self-image and which leaves no room for judging or for doubt. This is also the basis for an adequate sensory feedback upon which to base the direction of action.

The student is now ready to move on to step II:

II. Get a felt sense of the need or desire that motivates the action.

The teacher now asks the student to focus more deeply on his present experiencing and to answer him truthfully from within himself through that deeper experiencing. As in

the previous step, the student is not expected to try and change his behavior but to simply focus on the qualities of his own experiencing and to follow that where it leads. The teacher guides him, focusing on the deep-feeling need or desire (eros) that animates and moves the action. The attraction of this deep feeling draws the attention spontaneously to be more concentrated through love and interest, and hence attain a deeper level of relaxed concentration. This is something to be discovered in the process and there are specific components to this step. They are: A. deepening the body sense, B. letting the feeling emerge, and C. seeing where that feeling is tending.

A. Deepening the body sense.

The process of experiential Focusing requires a particular and refined sense of bodily experience. This sense is the basis for perceiving the felt shift that indicates that the process is working to create new experiencing and meaning. This understanding arises directly from the bodily awareness, as arrived at in the previous step. Now, however, attention is more specifically directed to the inner experience of the body during action (not so much to the action itself in its outer manifestations.)

In attending to his own inner bodily experiencing, the student is shifting his awareness to his self-perception, paying attention to the details of his self-image and

allowing those details to articulate into consciousness and/or change if they will.

The teacher guides the student into new somatic self-perception either by actively directing the experiencing or by simply watching and pointing out various aspects of it initiated by the student in his action. The student pays attention to his experience either by actively directing his attention to this body sense, or by simply letting his body sense direct him. The starting place is the student's experience of the action he has been doing, and this can be either as he is engaged in the action or as a remembered experience; in either case, it is taken as immediate experiencing. The teacher will ask the student to go through such a procedure, using the type of questions and instructions that follow:

1. What is your inner body sense, from the action you are performing? Describe the different body sensations that you have, putting the right word to the quality of each sensation.

2. Notice that sometimes when you describe the quality of the sensation the experience is more vivid (it comes into the foreground.)

3. Continue to describe the quality of the sensation, noticing what happens to you, inside, as you describe it.

4. Get the idea of what it means to locate a physical sensation in your body. Find the specific location of the

sensation and describe that location as exactly as possible.

5. After you know the quality and the location of the sensation, you can locate the actual physical center of the sensation, placing your attention there. When you do that there is a feeling of being inside the sensation, of participating with it, being with it or going toward it (the opposite of feeling distant from it or observing it.)

6. If you notice more than one sensation, work with the most vivid one or find the center of all the sensations taken together.

7. Notice what happens to the sensation when you feel the center of it.

8. When you have found the center of the sensation(s), notice if there are any other sensations in any other part of your body that feel connected to the one(s) you are focusing on. Especially note any connections to sensations through the center of your body. (This is your psycho-physical core and is vitally important in becoming centered or poised within yourself.)

B. Letting the feeling emerge.

A felt sense (as in Focusing) rests on experiencing the body sense, as just described. The felt sense is the bodily felt unity of sensation, feeling and meaning. When you get a felt sense of something, your experience changes (there is a felt shift) and new meaning emerges, a new complex of experiencing arises and takes form. At this

stage, the student is asked to allow this to happen as it will, and is guided into it. In his experiencing of the body sense, he has undoubtedly already experienced a change in his sensation as he identified its quality and located its position. Now he is to experience the feeling that goes along with the sensation, and the movement it carries. This is going much deeper than the original impulse that gave rise to the action. The teacher asks the student to stay with his experience even as that experience changes (as it may), to acknowledge those changes as they occur, and to be truthful to the new shape that the experience might take, no matter what that might be. In the dialogue between them, the student is to always answer from that inner feeling sense of himself. The teacher supports him in doing this and helps him find the way to do it, and accept the consequences, which, as we will see, can be far-reaching.

The thrust of the teacher's questioning is, "What is your feeling in all this?" This question, or one like it, directs the student's awareness into an experiential search for a felt sense. He is not to answer from his thinking but to wait for a feeling sense to emerge, to match it to conscious meaning, and to check back with his body sensation for verification. This is a very different way of thinking and answering. It goes something like this:

1. When you find the center of the sensation, notice the feeling that goes with the sensation.

2. Stay with the sensation and the feeling, and wait, paying attention to both sensation and feeling.

3. Get the idea of following the feeling with your awareness, wherever it leads.

4. Continue to follow the sensation and the feeling with your awareness. As you follow the sensation and feeling, notice if one or two words come to you that match or come from the feeling.

5. Say the words to yourself and notice what happens to your body sensation as you say these words. (This could also be a step in response to words from the teacher.)

6. Go back again, checking your body sensation to see if those words made a difference. Notice if there are any changes in your body sensation.

7. If necessary, repeat the process of asking, waiting, matching and checking until you get the right "fit" of sensation, feeling and meaning. You will know when this happens when you experience a bodily felt shift - a sense of relief, release, opening or lightening. There will be a sense of rightness as something lets go inside you, as if to say, "that is it!" This is new experiencing. There is a sense of freshness to it. There may be a sense of discovery, of having uncovered something that was hidden or lost or obscure (aletheia means unconcealment of that which was hidden in lethe, i.e. forgetfulness or obscurity.) You like it; the felt shift is always a pleasant experience even

if the feeling uncovered itself may not appear to be comfortable.

C. See where the feeling is (in)tending. What do you want?

A felt sense is your perceptual shaping (eidos) of the basic need or desire (eros) that gives rise to an action. This need or desire also has an end or goal (telos) toward which it is naturally tending. But, just knowing the feeling or desire does not necessarily give a clear perception of its goal. In order to get a full sense of what you want, you must stay with the feeling that has emerged until it shows its intention. Then you experience the feeling in its full movement quality, the full force of the erotic urge.

The teacher leads the student to this step by step, until the student, like the teacher, is caught up and impelled by eros toward a full experience of himself in the most basic way. Soon there is no denying the need and the drive, and no way to hide from it, so that the only way to go is to follow the feeling into deeper experiencing and transformation. Once the student fully realizes what he wants, he will love it, go for it, and not know how to turn back. The felt change that has already occurred, plus this further realization, turn the course of the student's feelings and rechannel his energy. He is being re-oriented, and the rest of the learning process comes out of this deep-feeling change. Instructions and questions used by the

teacher might be:

1. Stay with the felt sense that has emerged. Go into it. What is it telling you? What does it want? Where is it tending? (Use a question that touches the feeling, whatever works.)

2. Don't answer right away. Stay with the feeling. Wait for it to change, open up or move.

3. Become aware of an image or sound or gesture that comes to you as you pay attention to the feeling. (This is getting a "whole sense," in Focusing terminology.)

4. Notice the body sensations that go with the image, sound or gesture.

5. Notice the feelings that go with the image, sound or gesture.

6. See if you can find one or two words that match your sensations or feelings.

7. Say these words to yourself and see if they actually make a difference in your bodily sensation. (There may be a felt shift.)

8. Ask the question again and check back with the new sense that has emerged. See if there is a fit. Feel for it.

9. Repeat the procedure until the intention is clear in either pictures, gestures, sounds or words, and the connection matches the felt sense. Make sure it is a goal which expresses your desire. If not, go back again, match

and check. Ask: Why, for what, am I doing this action? Let the feeling tell. Let your body answer. When you have realized the intention, you will know, because your feeling and desire will open up into it and move you. When you know what you want, you naturally move toward it. Do you know how? This leads to the next step.

III. Distinguish between the intention and what you have been doing.

The last stage of the previous step leads naturally into this step. The student is now asked to recall the action or performance he started out with. He is to experience it now in relation to the feeling sense of the desire that originated the action and which is that action's true intent. Using a Focusing procedure of asking, waiting, experiencing, matching and checking (as detailed in the previous step), he is to go back and forth between the new feeling sense of his deep desire or need (found in step II) and the thinking/directing/acting he started out with (step I) until he gets a feeling sense of their interaction. If he had stayed with his original action during the previous step, he may already have accomplished this. Even so, he is now asked to deepen it. If he had forgotten the old action in the new feeling-experiencing, he is asked to recall it and re-experience it from the perspective of his new feeling awareness. In any case, there has been a change in the quality of his experiencing which can make the

re-examination of his habitual action enlightening.

The question which guides the inquiry here is something like: "Am I getting what I want by doing what I am doing?" or, "Am I doing what I really want to do, what I intend(ed) to do?" The student is directed to feel the answer. (This is the Socratic requirement to answer truthfully from within himself.)

It is important to note here how steps I and II pave the way for step III. In step I the teacher made the student aware that he didn't know what he professed to know, in regard to his actions and behavior. This was not carried too far at that point, because the student was not ready for the full impact of that realization; he was not free enough of self-judgment, resistances and defenses, and did not have a deep enough feeling sense of himself. Now he is ready, having been set up by that insight in step I and having developed a real feeling sense of his desire in step II. By step III the realization is compelling; he can't turn back on his desire, for he has felt it as a real and substantial part of himself, and he has let down his defenses and much of his former conditioned self-image. When he is asked (perhaps forcefully and directly at this stage) to find out for himself what his action is doing for him, he cannot help but feel, with all the force of the need and desire he has realized, that he is not doing well. He not only does not know what he had professed to know, but he doesn't even know

what he is doing. What he has been doing does not at all express his intent. He has neither knowledge (episteme) nor the right means (technai) of action. Formerly he had, with the help of the teacher, observed his dis-grace; now he experiences it and feels it from within himself.

This realization is an emotional upheaval for the student; it reaches deeply into his feelings and cuts deeply into his customary self concept, the very premise of his existence and behavior. He has to ask himself, "Who am I? What am I going to do? What can I do?" (The teacher is there to keep him awake to these questions.) He realizes that he desperately needs to attend to himself and learn what to do to correct his ways. This deepens his sense of need from inside himself. It further arouses eros in him and deepens his concentration to the level of absorptive attention (the next deeper level of relaxed concentration.)

In summary, then, knowing what you want to do and feeling the dis-grace of not doing it (and not even knowing how to do it) leads to feeling a need to change your use of self and your ways of acting. The student becomes much more involved in the emotional component of the learning process. He now feels compelled to learn and to know, and he experiences and realizes more strongly than ever that eros moves powerfully in him but that he does not know how to direct it toward its proper ends.

Also at this stage the student realizes that knowing

(episteme, interpreted functionally) is doing; it is the total way in which we use ourselves. The goal is to know the good, the beautiful and the true. Knowing these can enable you to use yourself properly, to obtain what you need and desire according to nature (as known to you in your own deep felt-experiencing.)

To know the good is to know experientially and deeply what is good for you, and thereby to act skillfully and well in accordance with that for the rightful attainment of your desire.

To know the beautiful is to act gracefully, with a beauty of performance. In this, an aesthetic or sensory appreciation of your doing brings a sense of pleasure and lightness.

To know the true is to act in accordance with your natural self in carrying through your desires into intentions, directions and actions toward their proper ends.

The student has been inspired by his teacher to actively desire the good, the true and the beautiful in human living and he will now direct his energy toward these.

The teacher, however, as shown in the Symposium [116], does not represent the good, the true or the beautiful, but the need and desire for these. He has thoroughly felt his ignorance and his own wrong-doing, and has redirected his desire toward the transcendental qualities. He does not profess knowledge of them but

embodies eros, the desire to be one with them in the wholeness of transcendence.

Step III's inquiry into the good, the true and the beautiful is mutual, in that the teacher needs the student just as much as, or even more than the student needs him. This is so that the teacher can exercise his own discerning, experiential intelligence (nous) toward the specifically human learning process, and thereby gain happiness through directing his own eros.

In Plato's Alcibiades Major [117] the relationship of the teacher to the student is compared to the eye of one person looking into the eye of another. The eye cannot see itself, but is enabled to see its reflection by looking into the special part of another's eye (the pupil) where the seeing ability (arete) resides. So too, the human self cannot know itself by itself, but can experience its own reflection by directing itself toward the self of another, especially toward the special part of the self (the pure intelligence, the discriminating, discerning intuition, nous) where the knowing capacity (arete) resides. Therefore, the seeing ability of the teacher's "eye" needs the student's "eye" (intelligence) in order to "see" himself (i.e. in order to apprehend and know the process of knowing, in its essential, living action.)

Taken experientially and functionally, this means that the teacher needs the feedback of the student's responses to

the process of his questioning, directions and guidance, in order to experientially regulate his own use of self, his knowing (episteme) and his discriminating intelligence (nous.)

The fullest exercise of human knowing (and this is what the teacher is aiming for) is in human action toward proper human ends. This requires a specifically human involvement in experiencing (a relationship) with specifically human feedback (the actions and responses of the student, from within his deep felt-experiencing.) The teacher loves the student and therefore pays close attention to him, as much for himself and his own good and happiness as for the good and happiness of the student. This is as it should be, for thereby the teacher remains centered in himself and is thus enabled to be a teacher. But in a greater sense, he loves the good, the true and the beautiful for their own sake, apart from either the student or himself, for it is in the act of surrendering into the deep transcendental experiencing of them that true happiness lies. The purification that, in the Phaedo, is said to characterize Dialectic, is, in the final analysis, not the release of the soul from the body, but the release of the logos (true speech) that guides the whole dialectical process from both soul and body. [118] The happiness (eudaimonia) that is thereby attained is not, then, a personal body-mind or psycho-physical satisfaction but the releasing of the

deep experiential intelligence (nous) into its proper functional activity in the logos, which transcends both body and soul. Truth (aletheia) is in the remembrance (anemnesis) of true Being (Consciousness itself, unto itself, auto to auto.) The relationship of teacher to student takes on this transcendental form as a deep surrendering into the presencing of Being. It is in this surrender that the good, the true and the beautiful are apprehended. These, then, through idea and logos, serve as the law or principle of governance for functionally directing the body-mind self.

The further investigation is an inquiry into what it takes to know and to do well. This is step IV, the movement from eros to idea.

IV. Get a clear Idea of what you truly want to do.

At this point the student has experienced the mismatch between his end (telos) and the means (technai) he had been employing to reach that end. He has suspended his action, since he doesn't know what to do: he can't do the old action, it doesn't feel right and doesn't work; he can't perform a new, right action because he doesn't have the feel for it or the correct mental directions into action that would let him know how to do it. The mutual inquiry that he and the teacher embark on now takes this suspension of action as its starting place. Step IV contains these two components: A. Discern the idea, and B. Practice the idea.

A. Discern the Idea.

The student must now discern what he truly wants to do, for this is the directing needed to guide his action. When he knows (by discerning) what he wants to do, he can begin to know how he wants to act and can start to explore the action itself. Not until then will he have any basis for acting, and he will be continually frustrated.

At this point, then, all the student has is a deepened sense of desire (eros) and his relationship with his teacher. However, that relationship is exactly what the student needs, for there is no answer to the question "What should I do, what do I want to do?" Its answer is always unknown because it is always moving and changing within the specifically human experiential setting of love and personal interaction that is the process of dialectical inquiry.

The question "What should I do, what do I want to do?" calls for an exploration of self in action (proper use of self.) In response, the student/teacher relationship makes for a full, passionate, open engagement of the whole self, with all its energies, in the interaction (the dialectic) and it is in this interaction that the experiencing and the new directions that form new right actions, are to be discovered. The student explores what he wants to do and how to do it well through the loving learning relationship that he is forming with a person (his teacher) who knows that he doesn't know and who is therefore capable of the

loving immediacy of experiential inquiry on a direct, personal, human level. This love is the most important factor in opening up the possibility of right human action in accordance with felt need and desire. It is through it that the fine discrimination in the act of felt-experiencing that is necessary for the right direction of action, is made possible. It shapes eros into the form and experience of personal interaction and responsibility. As a result, the student identifies the idea which would properly and efficiently guide action for the attainment of the feeling-goal (telos) identified in steps I,II and III.

It is important here to define the term idea. An idea is not a static representation or a fixed mental concept but the dynamic, moving impulse of action that sets that action into motion. An idea can take the form of an image, and that image can be expressed through a thought, a word, a feeling state or a kinesthetic sense, but the idea itself is not the content of any of these. It is their action-form and movement impulse.

An image, in this sense, arises from our experiencing and in its formation reverberates back through that experiencing for a real bodily felt change. [119] So, an idea is an action-image which is the dynamic form of an ongoing process, and which may or may not be concretely represented in consciousness.

How, then, is an idea discerned?

Combining all of the above, the discernment of ideai is an act of love, invested with all the human feeling of the participants (teacher and student.) It is discerned through a specific process of discrimination.

The Dialogue of Plato which deals most fully with the discernment of ideai through love is the Symposium. The Symposium focuses on eros, naming eros as the impulse that gives substance and force to the whole dynamic process of dialectical inquiry. Ideai guide this process. The process is continually examined, causing the experiencing of eros to be refined, and this refinement uncovers the idea. In essence, then, it is the act of discriminating finer and finer levels of eros (love-desire) that discerns the idea. It is not just letting the love impulse flow into action, without discrimination, that discerns the idea, but a very close, discriminating attention to that idea's form and movement, and to our uses of ourselves in love.

The steps of actualizing the idea go something like this:

1. Inhibition of action and Eros.

Inhibition is the first act in the discernment of the idea. It is necessary to refrain from eros' initial impulse, which is to discharge into action immediately. Only by inhibiting immediate reactions can you allow feeling to form, so that you can then experience it with a discriminating perception.

Thus, the love relationship between the teacher and the student has an element of restraint that allows the redirecting of passion wisely toward proper ends. They prudently, for the sake of what they truly desire (which, as we have seen, is, ultimately, transcendental to both of them), refrain from an attachment to each other, so that they can better know and serve the idea and the eros that moves in it, and in them. They seek the essence of their experiencing, rather than its emotional appearance as a show of affection or attraction. This is neither repression nor a sublimation to another form (a symbolic substitute gratification.) It is a deepening of the true character of the experience, a discriminating perception of its true inner movement. (This also creates the conditions of sophrosyne, erotic centeredness, in the relationship and in the investigation.)

As part of this inhibition, the student is also asked to refrain from the usual mental preparation for action made at the start of any movement. He is not only to inhibit, or refrain, from his usual actions. He is also to inhibit the action-image of his performance through which he initiates the action. This is a more subtle level of inhibition requiring a more subtle perception, necessary because this is the level of the old, habitual mis-direction of his actions. This level not only guides action into wrong doing and frustration, but also provokes the whole vicious cycle

of self-judgment, self-consciousness, distortion of perception, expectations, end-gaining, trying, muscle tightness, emotional reactions, and bungled actions leading to further mis-direction to try to correct or compensate. During the course of their mutual investigation for the idea, the teacher sees when the student is acting or responding to such preconceived images, and he points them out to the student so that he can identify them in his own experiencing, see how they are working in him, and let them go. This act of refraining from the immediate, conditioned response is an act of attention directed into present experiencing. It is this act of attention that discerns the idea.

On the concrete, bodily feeling level, inhibition also is the choice to disregard (or let go of, release) your distorted, conditioned self-image in order to open the way for new self-experiencing. Every thought, belief, opinion, notion or mental picture you have is a representation of a direction for the use of the self, which forms actions. All of these arise in relation to and are consistent with your self-image, which is the primary means of governing your use of self. The distorted self-image is seen in its distorting work of misdirecting action.

The intricacies of this examination are an integral part of the dialectical process and constitute the specifically intellectual elaboration of the method.

Dealing with this aspect of the process may be necessary at this point in the dialectic, and it is here that a dialoguing back and forth about beliefs and premises may take place. The general purpose of this is the inhibition of habitual, conditioned directions, and further focuses attention for the next step.

2. Do the action in your mind.

The student already has a goal or end in view (the telos of the action.) What he needs to do now is translate his desire into action. To do this he must gain new directions based on a new body sense of the new action. The idea will be an experiential complex of the body sense and the new direction, fitting to the new end he has in mind. The work to be done, then, is to clarify and translate this direction into the particular details of an action-image (an idea to direct action.)

The direction inherent to the feeling-intention is, at this point, the idea in seed form. This seed is brought into its full form through an elaboration of its sensual, emotive and intellectual details. What is needed is a dialogue between intellect and eros, in which the teacher and the student actively participate. The student will attend to bringing the idea out from himself, from this feeling-intention. The teacher will exercise his sensory and intellectual discrimination in the interaction to experientially guide the student in unfolding the idea

through new sensory experiencing and new directions. The student will feed back his responses to the teacher as he experiences the new directions and the new feel of the emerging idea.

The procedure of truthfulness in response is much the same here as in the Focusing method presented in step II. The student checks back and forth between his body sense and the emerging felt meaning, while the teacher guides him by questioning and directing him, leading him into finer discrimination and further elaboration of the emerging experiential complex (which is united and integrated in the emerging idea.) What they are looking for is a bodily felt match between telos and idea, a fitting of the goal-image and the action-image that feels right. The idea must be appropriate to the feeling and intention, and it must be clear and detailed enough to work powerfully in the nervous system to restructure experiencing and rechannel energy. Their work together is to clarify the body-feeling into articulated ideas.

In this stage, action and direction have been suspended. The work is a function of attention, discrimination, perception, imagination and choice, which are actions of inner focus. In practical terms, this means that the dialoguing now deals mainly with doing the action in your mind, trying it out as an action-image, and experiencing it inwardly through experiential focusing. The

back and forth between new meaning and changing body sense, with the guidance and discrimination of the teacher, creates in the student a new standard of directing and feeling which he can use to guide himself.

Doing the action mentally is a dialectical use of the process of storying that we talked about in chapter II. The feeling-intention is elaborated into an idea by translating it into the action of a story that you think might be "right" (a "likely story," in Plato's terms.) The storying procedure, as in scientific method, is to make successive tries at telling the story (hypothesis), and test it against the details of experience. You return to the story and continue trying until there is a detailed fit between the story's account of the action and the sensual, feeling details of the experience. In the end, this yields a total picture (theoria) of the action, centering around the unifying and integrating principle of the idea. There is a discriminated and elaborated matching of facts, hypotheses and principles, with consequences or actions following intelligibly from the ideas or principles.

At first the teacher may help by introducing story ideas, with possibility leading to new possibility and on to further elaborations of the action-image into the form of a coherent story. There are many ways in which the storying activity can take place. As seen in Plato's Dialogues, there are myths, legends, tall tales, "likely stories"

(hypotheses), etc., and they all serve the function of channelling eros toward discerning the idea.

The student thus gets a new image of action and new experiencing of himself as he mentally tries stories out, gets their feel, and sees how they work in him. With the new action possibilities, his experiencing may change and the story meanings may start to unfold further. With this, the student may begin to become active in the storying, and then dialoguing starts between student and teacher that elaborates on and clarifies the idea.

The story becomes invested with feeling. There is an excitement in the process which catches both teacher and student, which impels them forward to further possibilities. Thus eros starts to enter into and give power to the story work so that the original desire starts to find its first true direction toward appropriate action.

It is important to note that the student's new vision not only "changes his mind" but repatterns the way in which he is able to use himself through proper direction. The new idea is a new action-image to respond to at the moment of the initiation of action. This replaces the old, conditioned response with the possibility of conscious, free, creative action.

It is useful to understand the details of the storying process at this level of dialectical action. These details belong to the field of Rhetoric, in which figures of speech

and thought are brought to bear in creating and working with the stories, images and ideas used to develop the vision. There are a few details of what is required for an idea to be effective in serving its purpose:

1. It must be in the form of an action-image. This means that the story of the action might be told, for instance, kinesthetically, seeing someone do the action masterfully, and getting the feel of it, or by being directed in the action by the teacher while getting the feel of it, absorbing it without thinking.

2. The idea must be detailed, clear and articulated on the body-feeling sense level, and not necessarily on the level of the conscious thinking mind.

3. Conceive of the idea as being really possible and happening now, in present experiencing. The possibility must be experienced as real and clear, so much so that the same feelings are evoked as if the goal were attained.

4. The aesthetic quality of the experiencing must be pleasing for there to be a full flow of eros into the creation and maintenance of the idea.

B. Practice the Idea. Let it work for you.

Once the student has clearly discerned the idea, he projects it into his inner felt-experiencing (still inhibiting his outward acting) and lets it effect his whole body-self. This is so that it will stay with him as a spontaneous and automatic guide to action. (This is similar

to what Psycho-cybernetics talks about as creative experiencing through visualization, and inner game learning talks about as using "feel-images" to reprogram actions.) Instructions for this might be something like this:

1. Practice the action mentally in whatever form it has come to you. (This may be a visual or a kinesthetic image, or some other form of a "whole sense" of the action.) Stay with it as if it were actually happening, and focus in on the details of what is happening. Don't think that you are planning to do the action, just that you are getting the idea of the action. Stay in the present immediate experiencing, on the level of the idea.

2. Inhibit the impulse to try to grasp the desired end result. Instead, allow the action-image to spontaneously follow through to the end-result. Experience it happening without effort or trying.

3. Inhibit, disregard, release your former self-image as you project the idea. This allows the idea to create a new self-construct as the experience deepens. The new body-self sense gives a somatic fullness and substance to the new idea.

4. Focus on your experiencing and let the idea effect your body sense. Get a felt sense of the idea, let your body respond and change with the idea. Sense the felt shift, the bodily change, that happens with this response. Let the sensing and the feeling be as deep and as full as

you can. Stay with it as it changes. The more fully you experience the idea going through you, the greater will be its effect in redirecting your energy, channelling your feeling, restructuring your neuro-muscular set, and transforming your experiencing. Just follow the idea where it leads.

5. Follow all the steps of Focusing: waiting, matching, checking, locating the body sense and finding connections to other sensations, especially any through the body center, letting the feeling emerge, etc.etc. This is in order to thoroughly experience the idea and to let your whole experiencing change. If the idea itself changes in this process, let it, for it is not a fixed concept but a dynamic, moving form.

6. Repeat the experiencing of the idea over and over again until you are used to the new response pattern. Let the idea set into your automatic response patterns.

7. Practicing the idea mentally is a pre-activity, a preparation for action. Practice in your mind until you feel sufficiently sure of the idea to be able to follow it into action. Know that you must first have the idea precisely, clearly and vividly before it will work for you to direct effortless action.

8. When you have gotten the idea and practiced it sufficiently in your mind, go on to follow it into action.

This leads to the next step.

V. Follow the Idea into action, inhibiting your old response pattern.

At this point the student practices in order to get a feel for the action as a real outward performance. He trusts his natural body-self to discover the "means-whereby" (the technai) that embody the idea. This is the natural learning process where idea is translated into action without the effort of the conscious thinking mind.

The teacher is there to help the student identify and let go of the self-interferences that may still arise from old patterns of action, and to give guidance and experiential feedback about what the student is doing.

This practice is in simulated conditions of actual performance, without the pressures and necessities of having to perform. The purpose is to learn (or re-learn) the natural and proper relationship between direction (idea) and action (ergon.) The former, misdirected use of the self has been left behind through the process the student has just been through; he has prepared for action by discerning the idea that would clearly and rightly direct the action; now he is to perform action again but from an entirely different frame of reference. He is getting used to what may be an entirely new way of acting (and being), practicing until he really gets it and feels confident about it. Having the support of the teacher helps the student to dispel any doubts that may arise as he starts to perform his action in

this new way; this helps keep him from returning to the old end-gaining way of acting out of force of habit and in reaction to the newness of the effortless action.

Instructions might be:

1. Project the idea in your consciousness as a pre-set for the action. Stay with the whole feeling sense of it.

2. Broaden your attention to include both the core sense of yourself and the outer means of action, sensing and experiencing. This means, stay with the central feeling sense of your truly discerned desire and maintain an awareness of your psycho-physical core as you enter into the action.

The teacher helps the student do this by guiding him into a bodily felt sense of "primary control" in the use of himself, which is an important part of the awareness of core functioning. This "primary control" is an easy, effortless lengthening in the relationship of head, neck and torso during the performance of any activity. F.M. Alexander discovered that the lengthening in this area governs the lengthening or extension of the rest of the body needed for the proper execution of any act (physical, emotion or mental.) It allows the whole body-mind core to be steady, to be extended and alive, during any activity, so that outward movement is based on and organized around a poised, still center. This lengthening takes place as well on the subtle energy level, so that it is a basic factor of inner

felt-experiencing that governs and guides all levels of use of the self.

Having this steady sense of core, remembering his basic feeling-intention, and projecting the idea of what he wants to do, enables the student to be centered in his own experiencing as he moves out into the world for interaction with the environment.

3. Stay with the intention (from previous steps) to inhibit your old pattern of response. Practice this. Be in the situation and do nothing. Just experience it. Let go of your emotional involvement with attaining your goal, give up (release) your tendency to try and do the action the "right" way, according to a fixed, preconceived notion ("end-gaining.") (Letting go of attachment to the fruits of action allows more attention and energy to get focused into the action itself, which is what you want to do at this point.)

4. While continuing to project the idea of the new action and to inhibit the old response pattern, allow yourself to enter into action, making no effort to do it or control it. Trust the process and your natural body-self to respond to the idea and to perform the action. Just give your attention to the details of the present experiencing (self/environment) as you act, and the means-whereby will structure themselves through automatic feedback in the interaction of the idea and sensory-feeling experience. The

teacher monitors the action carefully and helps the student sharpen his sense of what is happening. The whole concern is with the idea and the precise experiencing of what is happening. Getting this right is the entire basis for the control and right direction of action, so there is no need to pay attention to the doing. Any doing is efforting and is to be inhibited. The act of inhibition is at the same time a choice to enter into the immediacy of present felt-experiencing.

5. Pay close attention to the means-whereby that develop in the course of practicing. Remember the successful means of action as you experience them (the teacher helps to identify the right and useful paths of action), get them set in your awareness and repeat them until you know them, and disregard unsuccessful means.

Repetition of successful and correct experiences raise the standard of somatic perception and direction, which establishes the conditions necessary for proper use; it also builds up the student's confidence in his ability to act rightly.

6. At this stage, practice in slow motion to get a thorough feel for what you are doing, while remaining steady in your core, inhibiting your typical reactions, and projecting the idea. Proceed by trial and error, letting the body-self learn the means of doing what you are asking for. Assimilate the experience throughout your awareness,

your whole being, letting a new body-construct form and accepting it. Let this new self-image become fully articulated so that it will be lasting as a structure of your experiencing that you can rely upon automatically in your actions.

This leads to the sixth and final step.

VI. Experience the results in actual performance.

Using his new standard of perception and precision of directing practiced in the previous step, the student performs the action under normal conditions (of setting, speed, etc.) and experiences the difference in the way he feels and in his ability to act. He goes with the feeling and the experiencing, lets what he practiced take effect, and experiences that effect. The student thus absorbs the result of the learning, the transformation in acting and experiencing, and appreciates it.

Here is where the full integration of the new structure of experiencing takes place and the action becomes automatic and spontaneous. What was practiced as inhibition, direction, attending to the present experiencing, keeping his center and remembering his purpose, become one with the action, so that the performance is an integral, effortless, graceful event. All the student needs to do at this point is to allow the action to happen, experience the results and watch the natural process of self-correction take place as his body-self adjusts to new

circumstances, and changes based on feedback.

For this to happen, the student must trust the learning that has occurred so far and rely on it as he enters into the action. There can be no guarantee in advance of what the results will be. He must act in order to find out, because the natural creative intelligence of the body-mind comes into operation only as one acts and thereby places demands upon it. Performing the action in realistic circumstances places a present demand on the whole psycho-physical self to act as a whole, and this brings all the student has been learning and practicing into actual coordination. This is where the results of the experiential transformation get the opportunity to be fully actualized.

Also, as the student acts, all his learning comes into coordination through the experiential feedback process. The student must let this happen, bringing all the attentiveness developed in the practice so far into focus in the present activity. When he does this, there is a much greater degree of relaxed concentration than he started with, because his attention has become highly articulated by focusing on all the various aspects of the learning process thus far experienced. Since his awareness is therefore more discriminating, the feedback that the student gets is more discrete and thus forms the basis for more precise, quick, appropriate directing of his actions. To do this, the student pays close attention and sees what happens, sees

what works. Everything happens as in the previous step except that he is now responding to immediate conditions and outside circumstances that he does not control. And his response must be immediate - this is the test and the actualization of his learning. Directions for this might be:

"Let the idea form and guide your body, feelings and attention. Experience the idea directing and organizing the whole activity, bringing together all the parts or elements into one graceful and efficient movement toward the goal. Experience the changes and adjustments that spontaneously happen as the idea continues to bring the parts together into greater harmony. Experience the fulfilling, easy, centered action that leads clearly and directly from feeling (eros) through intention (telos) to idea and its directing of action. Let this become a part of you. This is objective, experiential proof of the effectiveness of the natural learning process."

In this step, then, the student returns to activity and again simply experiences what he is doing as he does it (as in step I.) The teacher may point out when the student is misdirecting his actions, and where and how he is misusing himself, which leads him back into the process again (only this time at a deeper experiential level, in which the learning can be more subtle, automatic, refined, and quicker.) Eventually the whole process may happen

automatically as one act of discriminating attention.

Steps I to VI constitute, in their own way, what Karlfried, Graf von Durkheim called "the wheel of transformation." [120] All taken together, as one movement, is the idea of the dialectical act of learning, which is the act by which the fundamental moral experiential choice is made.

This procedure of repatterning is good for any and all actions that a human being might be engaged in. The important point is that it reaches into the sources of action in the person's deep self-experiencing. It is a physiological/emotional/intellectual process: the coordination of the student's deeply felt needs and desires (eros), his functional ability (arete), his action (ergon) and skill in action (technai), with the end (telos) for which he is acting. This work is done by careful and deep discernment of the most appropriate intention (idea) to direct, govern and form the action in the context of his most fundamental, somatic self-experiencing (his primary self-image.)

Conclusion. The essence of this learning process is the simple experiential shift in intent that reorganizes a whole complex pattern of action. This is the only thing that needs to happen for significant change to occur. All the above steps can happen almost automatically together in one act of discriminating attention, so that a personal

transformation is almost instantaneous, or they can be elaborated on at any point in order to get at or work with some particular aspect of the experiencing.

This approach is unique and well-defined in that it:

1. Covers the broad scope and deep concerns of human living.

2. Accomplishes the reorganization of a whole complex pattern of action/experiencing through a simple shift of attention (somatic intention, autonomic fundamental experiential choice.)

3. Works with body, emotions, deep feelings, intellect, life purposes, behavior and expression, all together in one creative act.

In this, human growth, individuation and self-actualization are seen as a somatic learning process, and very clear, direct, easy procedures are given for its practice. This provides a direct approach to creative mastery in living, thus fulfilling that important aim of education.

The Socratic dialectical way in which this process is facilitated is through skillful, intuitive felt-experiential questioning, which is the subject of a later section of this chapter. What has been presented here as a functional method of deep moral choice, is further reframed by being put into practice in and through specifically Socratic/Platonic means. Although it is not within the

scope or this paper to present a fully elaborated Socratic dialectical practice, the following three sections will attempt to suggest what that practice might look like, and thereby further shape the functional learning method we have been developing into a fitting instrument of a deep transformational dialectical inquiry that would be more fully in the spirit of Plato and Socrates.

Platonic Terms

We may now be in a position to functionally and experientially understand some key Platonic terms. This section will translate and define some of the most important Greek words used by Plato, in relation to the operational intent of the present inquiry. Just as the development of a functional practice of Dialectic goes a step beyond the functional interpretation, these practical experiential renderings of Platonic terms go a step beyond their functional translations.

The purpose of this is to serve as a substitute for a detailed functional/experiential examination of Plato's Dialogues. Defining key terms from the Dialogues will serve the purpose of making a concrete connection with Plato's actual writings without going into a hermeneutical study, which might be a whole dissertation in itself and is certainly way beyond the scope or purpose of this paper.

However, the re-defining of terms from Plato will help bridge the gap between the modern functional learning disciplines and the Dialogues, and provide a way of re-entering the Dialogues with a perspective that is renewed and hopefully deepened by the present experiential inquiry.

This is not meant to be a glossary, but an exposition on certain words which carry the weight of the dynamics of dialectical practice. Each word is the expression of an idea. As such, it has the power to engender vision and deepening self-knowing in direct felt-experiencing. They have this power, though, only as living ideas, not as dead metaphors or empty concepts. So, their re-definitions here will be in the form of the presentation of the living creative possibilities which ideai are. It will be necessary, however, to refer these ideas to the whole context of functional dialectical practice as presented in this paper because they exist and truly live only in that milieu.

Redefining these ideas in the context of a dynamic living process of dialectical practice will help to clarify and articulate that practice, so that both the ideas and the practice take on renewed meaning and life. The words themselves don't really matter. It is their root meaning in deeply felt experiencing that matters. If the deep true meaningfulness can be rediscovered we will have taken another important step toward the articulation of a

dialectical practice that might serve the greater unfolding of human life in happiness, truth, harmony, strength and beauty. It is our lives we are working with when we examine the ideas that these words express. Language, as "true speech" (logos) is the primary human means of embodying the creative moral intelligence for right action. So, how we use our words is intimately connected with how we use ourselves.

The following words were selected for the particular moral power that they carry and convey, and because, through "language sedimentation" (a term used by Husserl) over the centuries, this power has been lost. All translations of these words vitiate their life as ideas and completely miss their functional felt-experiential meanings. There may not be English words which give a one-to-one equivalent for any of these terms, so the exposition of the idea will have to serve to at least suggest the sense (as felt sense) of their meaning.

A functional experiential understanding of these words is both a summary of the inquiry into dialectical practice and a bridge to the more specifically Platonic enactment of that practice. There is no easy way to translate the whole linguistic culture in which Plato created (as a poet-philosopher). Theirs was a language of embodiment which reflected sensual, psychic and spiritual life experience. Ours is a language conditioned by commerce and technology,

by social and psychological alienation and by many centuries of the ideological assumption of mind-body dualism. The best we can do is to work with the language in a felt-experiencing way and intuit into it. Then, what emerges is our poetic dialectical creation.

All of the following Greek terms, taken together, form a unitary complex of felt meaning based on a phenomenological/ontological extension of the functional interpretation of Plato brought into practical experiential application. Their interpretive meanings organically interact with one another to contribute to the formation of a overall vision or idea of the dialectical practice. This vision informs the practice and is formed within it. The language, as a living reality, is an authentic utterance (logos) of the idea.

agathos

Moral good; that which is unconcealed (aletheia) as the necessary and prior condition of the native condition of happiness in enlightened awareness (i.e. awareness wherein the light of the divine shines forth in all forms. See theos.) What we dialectically apprehend as good is what truly situates or releases us into our natural state of prior wholeness and native happiness, in a way that is feelingly known.

Agathos is what is good according to physis discerned in logos in its essence (idea).

anemnesis

The process of recollecting (i.e. collecting together) of essential intent (idea) through direct intuitive felt-experiencing. The process of deep inquiry into ideai. The process of re-awakening to the presencing of being through deep self-inquiry, reaching into what is concealed (lethe, the unclear whole felt sense, as in Focusing) and bringing it to unconcealment (aletheia.) It is the specifically dialectical discriminating enactment of the essential process of direct bodily felt-experiencing.

aletheia

Truth as the unconcealing of the presencing of Being, uncovering the idea in the logos, articulating the emergence of felt meaning. Sharply distinguished from orthotes (which see), truth as factual correctness. This distinction, in felt-experiencing, is one of the primary aims of dialectical practice, wherein the discriminating function of nous (direct intuitive intelligence) as eikasia (the ability to see an image as an image) is distinguished from mimesis (imitation), wherein fantasy images substitute in consciousness for clear vision (theoria.)

aporia

A critical impasse in the drama of questioning/experiencing; a juncture point where your former habitual pattern(s) of thought, feeling and/or action no longer work and you are forced to enter into deeper self-

examination and inquiry into truth.

arche

The ruling or governing source, which is Being as pure Intelligence at the fountainhead of ideal; the first arising of all the impulses of Consciousness at the level of the divine (theos, which see.)

arete

A functional ability; efficient action, right action, appropriate action according to nature (physis); a "power" (e.g. the power of sight; morally, the power of right doing, of natural effective action.) Moral arete, the subject of much of Socratic inquiry, is the ability to function as human presence in accordance with physis (i.e. in the rightful flow of the life force) in its natural directedness (telos.) Virtue, meaning in this context a natural moral quality.

auto to auto

The self unto itself. The self-referential nature of preconceptual experiential cognizing in the beingness of transcendental consciousness. The self of Consciousness is known to itself without any outer referent. This is the most basic condition of and for self-knowing, which in its most fundamental level is a process of self known to self. The process of direct felt-experiencing is one of total inner responsibility. No-one else can do it for you.

dialektike

Deep self-referential felt-experiential moral inquiry through true speech (logos); mutual inquiry in relationship through dialoguing.

dihairesis

Procedure by division, in Socratic questioning and inquiry.

doxa

Opinion, belief, conventional speech, referring to representational images rather than to direct felt-experiencing and its articulation in ideai. A fixed concept of conventional thought. Alethes doxa is "true opinion," which is an informed, correct judgment concerning something.

eidolon

Representational image in general. In the Sophist Plato divides eidolon into eikon (likeness) and phantasma (fantasy image.) All eidola are what Ahsen (see chapter II section on "Eidetics") calls mechanistic images, which are dead, fixed, literalistic images. Sharply distinguished from eidos.

eidos (pl. eide)

An imaging of live energy presencing, coming out of direct felt-experiencing as an articulation of felt meaning (logos.) It is what Joseph Campbell calls, in referring to the essential quality of mythos (myth), as "metaphor transparent to the transcendent", a radiant imaging of

Being, a transforming image (as distinguished from eidolon, which is a dead, fixed mechanistic image.) It is the felt-experiential essence of a whole bodily sense, taken shape and form so as to come clearly into cognition.

eikasia

The ability to recognize an image as an image, i.e. the ability to recognize a representational form as such and to distinguish it from eidos and idea (which are the pure forms of the presencing of Being, apprehended through nous.) It is the de-hypnotizing ability of awareness. When you recognize an image as an image you then cease to be absorbed and overshadowed by it. Dianoetic eikasia is this ability, evoked and developed in the discerning and discriminating activity of dialectical inquiry. [121]

eikon

Image as representation, replica, likeness or imitation (mimesis.) Distinguished from image as presencing form (eidos.)

elenchos

Socratic refutation.

episteme

Essential felt-experiential intuitive knowing.

epithymia

Desire as passion and appetite; an off-centered emotion. One who is not centered (sophrosyne) is off-centered in passions which disturb and obscure awareness,

interfere with clear felt-experiencing, and distort the body-mind (soma.) Such off-centered distortions of life-energy are instances of epithymia.

ergon

Action. The logos of Dialectic is known only in action. Word and deed are intimately connected in the Dialogues [122] and in dialectical inquiry.

eros

The life-force (life-energy) in felt-experiencing as feeling, true desire and love. It is the impulse, the aspiration and the energy flow toward unity or uniting and wholeness, first experienced physically toward other bodies and sense pleasures and then on more and more subtle levels of felt-experiencing until there is union with the form (eidos) of beauty itself, which is the bliss or blessedness of the self known to itself (auto to auto) in pure transcendental Consciousness (Being.) For this as the "ladder of love (eros)" see the Symposium.

eudaimonia

Happiness, blessedness, the bliss of Consciousness at the level of transcendental awareness, re-awakened (through anemnesis) as the divine (theos) in us through deepening felt-experiencing into ideai, guided by eros (love-desire.)

harmonia

The perfect relatedness and blending of all elements in psyche and polis by being returned to the true governance

of ideai. A state of being, brought about by the spiritual/moral condition of sophrosyne (which see.)
hypothesis

In Socratic questioning, a tentative definition used as a suggestive, posited starting place for the inquiry.

idea (pl. ideai)

The felt-experiential intention, focus or direction within the process of felt-experiencing. It is that natural central focus by virtue of which, in the act of Focusing or in the Focusing that goes on in dialectical inquiry, the unclear bodily whole sense of "all that" (whatever) comes first into a vague but formed shape (eidos) of felt sense, and then into clear articulation (logos.)

kalos

Beauty, that which gives blessedness or bliss in deep felt-experiencing, thereby being the motivator of eros.

koinonia

Communion, combination, community. In Plato there is a natural koinonia of ideai in harmonia; in other words there is a natural integrity and consistency in felt-experiencing.

logos

True speech or authentic utterance of Being. It is the articulated form of the idea, the expressed felt meaning of a felt-experiential essence. Original expression of pure intelligence (nous) from source (arche.)

mimesis

Imitation, mimicry.

nomos

Convention, conventional forms of thought, feeling and action, pertaining to both individuals and to society in general. Social norms. Mental fixation on literalness of appearances (perceptual/conceptual literalness.)

Conventional representational thought and language, leading, when by itself, to the distortions and illusions of perceptual literalness.

nous

Immediate and direct transcendental intuitive intelligence, the quality and state of awareness that is capable of cognizing true ideai, in the act of felt-experiential knowing. This quality of attentive awareness is re-awakened (in anemnesis) through the dialectical process of finer and finer discriminating in the energy and movement of felt-experiencing, so that levels of awareness that transcend ego-consciousness and conventional mental fixations (doxa) are entered. Noesis is the activity of nous.

on

Being.

onoma

Name, what something is called.

orthotes

Truth as representational accuracy, factual (conventional) correctness according to nomos. A correct statement.

ousia

Being as existence, or the essential being of something. Parousia is presence, or the presencing of Being.

paideia

Comprehensive culture and learning; higher education and learning, as much social and political as individual. Dialectical paideia is the specifically moral/spiritual higher learning that takes place through Dialectic.

pathos

Passivity, a state of subjective self-concern, being at the effect of outer influences or emotional passions.

philia

Moral/spiritual friendship; unqualified spiritual love, mutual presencing of Being, true friendship in the logos.

phronesis

Right action in accordance with physis and with the idea of the good. Correct discernment of right action in accordance with the idea of the good. Practical wisdom, in this sense.

physis

The flow of natural functioning; the life-force (life-

energy) in nature and in direct felt-experiencing. It is the force of the natural arising of Being into felt-experiencing or presencing.

poiein

The act of creating in physis (the flow of the life-force.) The artistic process of creating, in nature, action and experiencing.

pseudos

Falsity, falseness in perception, self-deception caused by perceptual illusions. A fantasy image taken literally.

psyche

The aware (but not necessarily conscious) presencing of Being in felt-experiencing. The human being is "not a thing or a person but a presencing of Being" (Heidegger.) This presence is felt and experienced in awareness in the intimate relationship fostered by Dialectic. It is your essential vibration in the life-energy whereby you are recognizable as an individual being.

psyches therapeia

Caring for the soul (psyche), which is the fundamental attitude of dialectical inquiry, just as the fundamental attitude of the Option Process of inquiry is "to love is to be happy with..." It is nothing like modern psychotherapy, but rather a felt shift to wisdom (meaning, moral right action) through acts of fundamental inner self-correction

(experiential moral choice.) [123]

soma

Body as organic, living, aware, felt-experiential process, not as object or thing.

sophrosyne

Being centered, present within self, steady within the essential presencing act of felt-experiencing.

techne

Skill, know-how, practical aptitude, craft.

telos

Vector and directedness of the life force (life-energy) in any action. It is the direction of the original intention (idea.)

theoria

Clear vision of ideai and eide brought about through the function of nous. A view or viewpoint, a picture of whatever is under consideration.

theos

The divine. The divine self-radiance of Being (transcendental pure Consciousness.) Source (arche) as light and love radiance in Consciousness. The divine, blissful level of Consciousness where ideai have their first impulse of arising and taking shape (forming into eide.) This is a level of experiencing characterized by inner light or luminosity of transcendental Consciousness (hence, divine) whereby all forms of experience shine forth

(phainesthai.)

thymos

Passion, spirit (as in the phrases, "a spirited horse", "a spirited fighter"); inner drive or power; vital force.

ti esti

One of the fundamental primary Socratic questions. "What is it?" This is asking for an essential definition, which is seen time and time again in the Dialogues where Socrates first asks this question and then dismisses answers based on particulars. It is asking to bring an unclear felt sense (what is concealed, lethe) into articulated felt meaning (unconcealing, aletheia.)

tode ti

This thing, this something; the referent of a question or statement; "what itself is", the definition of something in the form of eidos and ousia (its essential being.) In Focusing it would be what we are looking for when we ask for the crux or essence of "all that."

Socratic Method

Common opinion assumes that there is something called Socratic method and that its process and action are well defined. Loosely, just about any use of a question and answer method of teaching is called Socratic method. More precisely, a specific way of reasoning dialogue using evocative questions modeled on what Socrates does in Plato's Dialogues is taken to be Socratic method.

Yet, Plato himself never defines Socratic method. Neither does he ever put forth a definitive statement of what Dialectic is, although this is brought into question and close scrutiny, with some movement toward definition. Both the questioning actions of Socrates and the movement of Dialectic (if these can be distinguished) are presented in the movement of the Dialogues. There is no definitive statement of Socratic method or of Dialectic because, if there is a method (and this, like all other matters, is questionable), it is being presented to us in the very form and movement of the Dialogue we are reading, and this form asks us, even requires us, to participate in its movement. We are being asked to enter into an action, and thereby make our way, in awareness and experiencing, to whatever kind of definition might emerge from the inquiry. There is, and can be, no substitute for this path of inquiry, discovery and insight.

This is a similar situation to the teaching of so-called scientific method in schools. There is a very great difference between the listing of steps that constitute scientific method and the actuality of what a scientific researcher does in investigating, hypothesizing, testing, theorizing and reaching conclusions. There may be guideposts along the way, and even certain rules of procedure, but these are more like guiding principles while in the process than they are instructions for what to do. There is no operating manual.

So, in the view of functional experiential Dialectic that we are developing, all attempts to delineate some specific thing called Socratic method are as much distortions and oversimplifications as is the high school presentation of scientific method. What we are looking for is not a formula for how to do it, which would be like trying to learn to dance from a book. We are looking for a way of actually and fully entering into living participation in the flow of the process, which is like learning to dance by dancing with someone who is doing the dance, feels it inside, moves with it and carries us along. It is the direct awareness of immediate felt-experiencing (as in Focusing) that carries us into the flow of Dialectic. It is only in allowing ourselves to be carried into this that we can learn the Socratic activity or method.

We can learn this Socratic activity by entering into

the drama of deep inquiry in a felt-experiential way, utilizing the preparatory (propaedeutic) disciplines of functional learning as approaches to the basic movements and steps. Certain guideposts specific to the dialoguing activity of Socrates, as exemplifying the dialectical drama, can create an approach to the process that is characteristically Socratic and dialectical. This dramatic view of the process, in turn, makes the Socratic dialogue approach available and useful as an experiential functional learning discipline.

In this perspective dialectical method is a dynamic experiential process of interaction between contexts of action, behavior, experience, opinion and belief; and the ideas (ideai) that form and govern these. Re-organization takes the form of re-visioning the ideas that underlie and structure experiencing. This is done by reframing, through question and answer, the contexts in which situations are held; by getting at, through generative questions, the underlying intents (telos) that direct action; by putting into question one's everyday habitual "use of the self" in order to reach into the deeper sources of action and experiencing; by reframing and thereby relativizing judgmental statements into statements that describe behavior or a pattern of action, which can then be worked with in this form as an action which can be redirected (rather than as a static object or occurrence); and, in general,

reframing statements that attribute substance into functional, relational statements. It is important to note that this very intellectual activity takes place within the process of experiencing and is an essential part of that process. In this view, the intellectual function is as somatic as any other human action, and is concerned with the dialectical activity of discerning ideas within the ongoing life process.

This activity of discerning ideas is crucially important for the experiential dialectical process. It is this dimension of experiencing (the teleological) that specifically reaches into and clarifies the purposive life dynamic within the somatic process, and it is this which makes the learning process a centrally and deeply human feeling experience. Socratic questioning directs the learning process into the deep-feeling motivational core of living where needs, wants, desires and aspirations are formed. When Socratic dialogue is placed within the somatic functional learning disciplines it gives the possibility of opening them to the whole dimension of the life purposes within the somatic process, that underlie, form, govern and motivate the functional dimension. Function organizes around purpose (telos) and the experiential use of Socratic dialogue specifically and clearly reaches toward the life purpose.

Although there may be many guideposts for entering

into the Socratic activity, such as the use of arguments, refutation (elenchus), irony, paradox, myths, stories, etc., there is, according to Robinson in his study of Plato's Dialectic [124], one central principle, which can be stated in these two propositions: "(1) that dialectic is the supreme method of discovery as well as of teaching, and (2) that dialectic has its being only in question-and-answer." The question and answer form carries the entire movement of the dialectical drama and thereby includes and subsumes all the other elements. Therefore we will here concentrate on the Socratic art of questioning. Without falling into the trap of trying to prescribe a formula for a Socratic method, we might still ask what is the true way of Socratic questioning.

A first answer to this is that Socratic questioning occurs only in a morally and spiritually engaging conversation. Dialectic arises and has its being in live philosophical dialogue. [125] It is what may be called "conversational method." [126]

Dialectical conversation proceeds by means of dividing (dihairesis) and tentatively defining (hypothesis.) [127] These two actions proceed, respectively, by thinking in opposites ("the skill of developing the consequences of opposed assumptions even while one is still ignorant of the ti esti, the 'what' of what one is talking about"), and by differentiating concepts. These two movements of the

dialectical drama are intimately related in Plato.

These are intimately related by their being the procedure by which dialectical inquiry examines the way in which we communicate, while itself being in the process of that communicating. Toward this end Plato examines the means that we use to get our meaning across to someone, and distinguishes four components of any insight we might have of something. These are the four elements in any act of communicating. They are:

1. the name or word; what something is called (onoma.)
2. the explanation or conceptual definition (logos.)
3. the example, appearance, figure or illustrative image (eidolon.)
4. the knowledge, insight, "true opinion" (alethes doxa.) [128]

These are the ways, according to Plato, which anything we cognize is present to us, and by which we represent it to ourselves and to another. All four are there in every act of cognizing and communicating. Yet none of them, taken singly or together assures us of certainty in our knowledge and communication of what we are talking about. There is always the very real possibility of falling into falsity (pseudos) since these are forms of representation, akin to imitation and fantasy, not truth.

All four means are trapped in the dialectic of the image or copy, for insofar as all four are intended to present the thing in and through themselves they must

of necessity have a reality of their own. That which is meant to present something cannot be that thing. It lies in the nature of the means of knowing that in order to be means they must have something inessential about them. This, according to Plato, is the source of our error, for we are always misled into taking that which is inessential for something essential. What occurs here is a sort of falling away from what was originally intended . . . Plato says expressly that this happens to all of us and that it fills us with confusion and uncertainty. [129]

Plato uses the example of a circle. It is clear that a circle is neither the name we have for it (onoma) nor what we see in nature as circular objects nor what we draw as a circle (eidolon), nor is it our definition (logos) of it. However, through all three of these we have an insight (alethes doxa) into what we mean by the circle, so that we, in a way, look right through the drawn figure, the word and the conceptual definition when we are conversing about a circle. This act of looking through makes communicating possible.

Yet, even this looking through to the pure thought, or "true opinion", of the circle, is subject to falsity and deception. Our opinions (even our true opinions, our correct representations, our perceptions) change, and with them our insights. They are part of the comings and goings of appearances, of life, and cannot therefore provide us with truth or certainty of knowing. We are not on firm ground.

This means that anything under discussion, anything that we question or inquire into, is both revealed and

concealed by the very means that we are using to inquire with, i.e. our modes of communicating through language, image and concept. Because of this, all human discourse is continually prey to sophistry, which is the taking of what is false for what is real or true. Socratic discourse is ever aware of this possibility and makes it a central concern of its practice.

This brings us to a second answer to the question about true Socratic questioning. Because it is ever vigilant to the inevitability of falseness and deception in the modes of communicating and cognizing, Socratic inquiry focuses on a continual careful examination of all four modes, skillfully and skeptically zigzagging back and forth among all of them, always on the lookout for illusions.

What Plato describes here as the untiring movement back and forth through the four means of knowing is in fact the art of dialectic - a perpetual passing from one thing to another which nonetheless perseveres in the single direction of what is meant and which, for want of cogent deductive proofs, remains in proximity to what is sought without ever being able to reach it." [130]

The ways of doing this are the two phases of Dialectic described earlier: 1. procedure by simultaneous contradiction and by dividing, and 2. tentative definitions. These two seemingly dissimilar directions of inquiry allow the dramatic movement of the conversational play to take place on many levels at once, thereby guarding against a reduction to the illusion of literalness or fixity in any of the four modes. These two working together also lead to the

famous Socratic aporia, the confounding of the conventional ego-mind and self, opening to the euporia of releasing into the direct felt-experiencing of ideas (ideai.)

The specific means for doing this are the Socratic questions. They are guided by this examination of the four modes of knowing in the search for truth, and by the two primary movements talked about earlier.

There are two main types of Socratic questions: 1. primary questions, whereby some important issue, usually moral, is examined, and 2. secondary questions, whereby the answers to primary questions are examined in more detail. Primary questions take the form "What is x?" or "Is x y?" Examples of the first are, "What is justice?" in the Republic, "What is temperance?" in the Charmides, and "What is courage?" in the Laches; examples of the second are, "Is justice better than injustice?" in the Republic, and "Are those who become friends like each other?" in the Lysis.
[131]

Secondary questions, usually of the "whether" type [132], are clarifying and discriminating questions, which carry the inquiry forward, generally through dividing, contradicting, and opposing, usually asking for the consideration of specific alternatives (either yes/no, a complete list or one of many.) [133] There are very many forms that secondary questions may take, but a few examples are:

"Are pleasure and knowledge the same or different?"

(Gorgias)

"Do we say that one must never willingly do wrong, or does it depend upon circumstances?" (Crito)

"And how are you to know who produced a speech or anything else beautifully when you are ignorant of the beautiful?" (Hippias Major)

Primary questions start the inquiry, the search for the articulation of truth (aletheia) through the act of focusing and defining (hypothesis.) Secondary questions go in the direction of dividing (dihairesis.)

Examples of primary and secondary questions in ordinary discourse are:

Primary questions

1. of the form "What is x?"

"What is 'all that'?" ("all that" in the felt-experiential Focusing sense.)

"Do you really know what 'all that' is?"

"What are you talking about?"

"What exactly is that (quality, state or condition) that you are talking about?"

"Who are you?"

"What are you doing?"

"Where are you going?"

"What is your good?"

"What should you do?"

"How should you live?"

These, like all Socratic "what is it" (ti esti) questions, are almost completely open-ended. The number of alternatives possible for an answer is indefinite, possibly infinite.

2. of the form "Is x y?"

"Is this (quality, state, condition, etc.) really what you say it is?"

"Is that (whatever) good?"

"Is that a virtue?"

"Does your felt sense of this feel like (whatever . . . some quality)?"

"Is this the same as , or like, that?"

Secondary questions

1. Either/or:

"Is it this or is it that?"

"More or less, bigger or smaller, greater or lesser, better or worse, one or many, same or diverse?"

"Which is more, bigger, greater (or whatever)?"

"Which is more, bigger, greater, etc. to do, to have, to be, etc.?"

"Is this such and such a quality, condition, state, etc. or is it that?"

2. Differentiation:

"Is there any difference between this and that?"

"What distinguishes this from that?"

"How would you compare this to that?"

"What qualities of this (or what in the felt sense of this) make it unique?" "What characterizes this?"

"Is it more like . . . or more like . . . ?"

3. Opposition:

"What is the opposite of this?"

"Is what you are saying opposed to this . . . (whatever)?"

"Is what you just said opposed to what we said earlier?"

4. Gathering (synogoge):

"Do these (qualities, conditions, states, feeling, etc.) have anything in common?" "What is it?"

"In what way is this . . . like that?"

"What is it exactly, by virtue of which, all these are like each other (or are such and such, are the same kind, etc.)?"

5. If . . . then . . .

"When someone does this, what follows from that?"

"What are the consequences, further actions, responses, results, etc.?"

"When someone does this (such and such) does that (such and such) follow?"

"If this happens, does that have to happen?"

"What happens when (or if) . . . ?"

"If you were to follow this idea (or image, etc.)

where it leads or unfolds, where might it go?"

6. Clarifying questions:

"Why do you say that?"

"How do you know?" "How can you tell?"

"What is this like?" "How is it like that?"

"Who says?" "According to whom?"

"Is that always true, always the case?"

"What do you think (or believe) about that
(whatever)?" "Why do you think that?"

"What do you know about that?"

"How do you know what you are talking about?" "What is
this knowledge, knowledge of?"

"Is that true?"

"Is that possible?" "Does that exist?" "How does it
exist; in what sense does it have being?"

Along with these lines of questioning there are
specific classes of questions that search for, evoke and
examine each of the four modes of knowing. Examples of
these are:

1. onoma, name.

"What do you call that?"

"What is that called?"

"What is a word for that?"

2. logos, conceptual definition.

"What do you mean by that?"

"What does that (or that word) mean?"

"How do you explain that, account for that?"

"What do you mean when you say...?"

3. eidolon, image, example.

"Can you give an example of that?"

"Can you describe that?"

"How do you picture that?"

"What does that look like?"

"What is your experience of that?"

"What's that like?"

4. alethes doxa, true opinion, judgment, insight.

"What is the nature of that?"

"What is the essence or crux of 'all that'?"

"What is that saying, where is it going?"

"What is it?"

There is no prescription for the use of these questions except the guiding principle of following the inquiry where it leads, through direct felt-experiencing, in the search for truth, being ever on the guard for sophism, illusion, fixation and reduction to literalness (or mechanical image, dead metaphor, linguistic or conceptual "sedimentation".) When Socratic questioning is used functionally and experientially to facilitate the act of fundamental experiential choice, its full dialectical character and its proper use emerge. For this, it must be put into the context and practice of felt-experiential questioning, which is the topic of the next section. When

this is done, not only does Socratic dialectical practice come into sharper focus as a functional method, but it in turn helps give a specifically dialectical form, structure and integration to all the experiential functional learning disciplines that contribute to the method of Dialectic.

Experiential Questioning

The practice of Dialectic is a deep ego-transcending felt-experiential examination into your doing, in all its aspects and levels, right down to its original impulses of intention, with the natural spontaneous result of an authentic moral/spiritual redirection in the use of the self through a fundamental inner shift. This is what the fundamental experiential choice is all about.

Subtle exploration into felt-experiencing as it functions in directing the use of self, is the basis of the process. It is from this deep subtle felt-experiential level that we form and direct the use of ourselves. Dialectic asks the student to think deeply, in an entirely new way; to think into his immediate felt-experiencing. To think deeply in this way requires a precise and skillful process of self-inquiry by means of subtle discriminating feeling-attention (felt sensing, in Focusing terms) in the process of direct experiencing. In the practice of Dialectic the repatterning of the structures of experience takes place as a spontaneous and whole response out of inner felt-experiencing as a person's own self-directed inner movement. It is an act of self-knowing, moral power (arete) and spontaneous creative choice. This self-reflection of experiencing (self-knowing), in itself, brings awareness, releasing, opening, and the felt shift of transformation.

It is the basis for the fundamental experiential choice. The whole method is built around this.

Dialectic involves going back and forth between levels and parts of experiencing, discriminating and articulating a new self-knowing and way of being through that interplay, within a deepening and crystallizing felt-experiencing. It finely articulates and pointedly furthers the unfolding of the felt-experiential process and elaborates the zig-zag aspect [134] and the subtleties of it while putting it in a process of dialogue questioning and perspectives with the specific dialectical moral thrust.

The teaching method of Dialectic is to track the experiencing, while interacting with it to help the process of discriminating, releasing, opening and shifting.

The work is done toward and in the life-energy, in presence (spirit.) Tracking the experiencing requires you to flow with the life-energy for releasing and opening. Releasing and opening within the life-energy is a transformational shift. All the means and approaches used in Dialectic are merely ways of accessing the life-energy in the felt-experiencing of Presence in order to open into a felt shift, release and unfolding of new meaning. This is the specific means for discerning true ideas (the forms of the presencing of Being.)

Real creative insight from within is when meaning emerges from felt-experiencing, as a shift in perception, a

reinterpretation which amounts to a repatterning and transformation in the complex of experiencing (all that goes into making a unitary experience.)

For this insight to come from within, it must be evoked, not led to or imposed from without or suggested; and it must include all the components of experiencing. This is all best done through a process of innocent questioning, directed into the whole complex of the experiencing, following the lead of what the person discovers along the way.

An important underlying value in Dialectic is that the ongoing experiencing process shall be the main determining factor of the method, content, approach and ideas used in the interaction. For it to be true to its functional aims and purposes the whole process must be thoroughly evocative and not directive. Therefore, the experiential functional way to facilitate the central act of fundamental experiential choice, and thereby bring Socratic Dialectic into practice, is through direct experiential questioning. This way of practicing is the essence of loving concern and respect, of trust in the transformative power of anamnesis, and of empowerment.

Experiential questioning consists of attentively tracking the ongoing process of felt-experiencing, sensitively and pointedly questioning directly into it, and assisting the opening and releasing into a felt shift and

the emergence of new felt meaning (the idea) through various other approaches such as stories, arguments, challenges and alternative viewpoints. This procedure brings the means of practicing Dialectic entirely in line with the functionality of the primary method, so that its method and process fit its aims and goals. It is not just a way of facilitating the fundamental experiential learning but is truly the embodiment of that process. Through the means of deep experiential questioning, Dialectic is functional and experiential in both form and content, and, in practice its form is its content: the ongoing deep inquiry. Through this, the whole process of fundamental experiential choice described in the previous section of this chapter simply takes place spontaneously as an unfolding and unconcealment (aletheia) within the movement of the questioning and the inquiry. Thus, the idea flows naturally out of the experiencing, and the practice of dialectical questioning evokes and maintains the flow of experiencing.

The main methodological characteristic of this procedure is experiential dialogue. This takes place, as acts of experiential self-reflection, through differentiating, tracking, discriminating and releasing in felt-experiencing. This takes you through all the levels and aspects of the dialectical process. All the experiential functional disciplines reviewed in chapter III are possible access routes and experiencing modalities of

this deep self-examination and felt shift of releasing; the specifically dialectical experiential questioning is the method.

A dialogue question is a invitation to an opening, a felt shift, a releasing. It is a respectful invitation to consider, from within yourself, an opportunity or possibility - with no imposition, judgment or expectation from outside. The dialogue process itself brings a shift to a new way of feel-thinking, i.e. direct felt-experiencing and trusting the process where it leads.

Questions have subtle great power. Like Feldenkrais movement repatterning, they go under the radar of defense mechanisms and evoke profound shifts almost without your noticing, without catching the move, the action of what's happening. Socratic questions are so effective below the conscious and unconscious ego defenses because they are at once both engaging and disarming. They engage deep inner felt-experiencing and disarm conscious thinking from its usual ways, thus making the process itself one that is largely unconscious for the experiencer - not tracked by self-conscious thinking and understanding but directly experienced.

Real inner fundamental experiential choice is not a conscious thinking process. What is really going on in the dialectical process happens on an unconscious level, while the conscious thinking mind is being absorbed by the

questioning and the fun and play of it all.

Good dialectical questions lead directly to an inward experiential search that can then deepen into a felt shift and release, and emergence of new felt meaning. They are questions without a content or expectation of their own, but which suggest, require or ask for such content to emerge. You always simply follow the questioning where it leads, trusting the process of remembrance (anamnesis) and emergence of truth.

Experiential questioning takes you directly into felt-experiencing, not into thought provocation, theory building or other forms of conceptualizing. Experiential questions evoke form the inside, from source, the place of fundamental experiential choice.

Questions such as those in the chapter III section on "Questioning", as well as questions that evoke the processes of Focusing and Releasing, are used. The specifically Socratic questions bring out the dialectical characteristics of discerning and discriminating within the process. These questions, and others that intuitively arise according to the occasion, are guided by the principle of fundamental experiential choice in the process of direct felt-experiencing. Thus, they are questions that honor and track the immediacy of the experiencing, range through the whole realm of possibilities in consciousness, reach into the deep feeling-intuition of being for the emergence of presencing

through true speech (logos), open to the unconcealment (aletheia) of ideai, and move to surrender in the divine condition of unqualified love. It is this use of the questions for the specific experiential functional dialectical purpose (telos) that gives them a different character than what they had in their pre-dialectical use. When guided by the idea of Dialectic and the direct intuitive intelligence (nous) of the deep-searching felt-experiencing, the questions take on an entirely new life in accordance with the love, the moral beauty, the truth-telling and the flow of the inquiry.

This process of questioning gathers and further reshapes (reframes) all the functional learning disciplines, facilitates the steps of fundamental experiential choice in true Socratic manner with no imposition or instruction from an outside authority, and brings out the true dialectical character of the method. The form and process of Socratic Dialectic synthesizes all the other approaches to its overall action and character. The way that the dialectical action takes place molds the action of all the others to itself, to form a powerful unitary process with many options of action available.

The functional disciplines of Focusing and Releasing can serve to illustrate this. The felt-experiencing of Focusing and Releasing are major experiential dynamics of the transformational process, of opening to greater

wholeness. Tracking and dialoguing in the flow of these is the main process of the dialectical method. However, although the practice of Dialectic is a felt-experiential approach similar to Focusing and Releasing, the experiential questioning and perspectives and the skillful use of the dynamics of the internal interplay of parts in the drama of unfolding ideas, make this characteristically different from those specific methods. The dialectical moral intent has reshaped these methods to its own purpose and use.

In Socratic Dialectic the drama, pattern and movement of the questioning itself, is the central and crucial function of the whole process. The main thrust of the experiential questioning is to evoke a felt-experiential drama and foster its action through stages to the natural, spontaneous transformation that is the essence of dramatic action. The felt-experiencing and the inner perceptual shifts are the real movement that takes place as a result.

Useful, effective dialectical questions are always questions of action within the drama of ideas, storying and enacting the emergence of discriminative felt meaning. Experiential questioning is thereby characteristically the questioning into ideas. Dialectic focuses on the play of ideas (ideai) (especially the ideas of the good, truth and beauty), the logos of articulating felt meaning, and the expressive riding of the life-energy which is the opening to Presence. The dialectical drama of ideas in Presence and

their expression as "true speech" (logos) is the heart and soul of Socratic questioning, and the "why" of the questions - what they are for and where they are leading. The Socratic process is a logos (an act of "true speech.") It embodies the natural laws of the relational power of speech. So, practicing Dialectic automatically brings the methods of experiential functional learning into the higher moral and spiritual purpose of Dialectic, through the logos in the play of ideai. The natural directedness of Dialectic to follow the questioning wherever it leads embodies the spirit of the logos.

The Socratic questioning best facilitates the process of discriminating, discerning experiencing in another person because it is empathic (accepting, loving, respectful), pointed (goes right to the heart of what is going on), interactional (steps follow only from what happens in the person as the process develops), and empowering (only the person knows the truth of his felt-experiencing as it emerges in the process. No-one else knows, the teacher being there to just focus the process and interact with it to bring it out.) The specifically Socratic questions are refinements of experiential questions (such as those used in Focusing or in Releasing, etc.), getting to greater discrimination and discernment in the act of learning/experiencing. They cover the entire range of felt-experiencing, in its many and varied levels and aspects,

from physiological experiencing to storying to fine intellectual discrimination in the modes of communication and signification; from the presencing of Being through imaging to the structures of representation; the whole range of possibilities of what may be present to consciousness. They track this experiencing skillfully and attentively to the emergence of ideai and fundamental choice, and to the opening to love and the surrender to divine presence (the good) which is the deep experiential felt shift.

The dialectical examination of life patterns, through the disarming and engaging character of the questions, is itself a disruption of habitual patterns of action and experiencing, so that they spontaneously release, shift and change.

This is why people change in the questioning/examining process and don't even remember what their pattern or problem was, without any specific strategy to alter or change the pattern, just the intention to examine the structure of the experiencing.

The examination of the experiencing takes you to a perspective outside of the experiencing where you look at it in a kind of experiential reflection. This in itself is a significant disruption of the pattern as well as being freeing and empowering in regard to your own experiencing and choosing.

Because of its evocative, deeply experiential nature,

in which the immediacy of direct bodily felt-experiencing is honored above all else as the opener to emergent truth (aletheia), there is and can be no technique to the practice of Dialectic. There are so many possibilities at each step, in each movement, at each juncture of the questioning, that you have to see and realize that it cannot be a technique (a techne). It can only be known in yourself from the doing of it, and intuitively applied from a place of "not-knowing knowing."

There is no set theory or system of assumptions or presuppositions but there is ongoing theorizing, which has purposive intent that follows from main dialectical values. But even that purposive intent is something that is only discovered as part of the ongoing interactional process of inquiry, and has no fixed conceptual commitment.

There is no philosophy (no metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, etc. as rational doctrine) and no theory; there is philosophizing and theorizing as the discriminating use of intelligence within the ongoing felt-experiencing. This, however, leads to no conceptual conclusions because that is not its intent or application, but to a more discriminating right use of the total self in felt-experiencing. The experiencing process itself determines the philosophizing and the theorizing that goes on in it, and which serves it in multiple and varying ways.

The simple process of dialectical felt-experiential

inquiry accomplishes transformation without any concern for theoretical or philosophical commitments, or with goals, purposes or "desired outcomes." Even the process of fundamental experiential choice described earlier is used only as a guideline and not in any way as a prescription for action. Results simply emerge appropriate to the person in his felt-experiencing, his inner knowing, what his bodily felt sense images forth. New intentions, ideas, purposes, and desires simply emerge as new imaging in this process with no imposition or concern for making anything happen.

Philosophizing that serves the ongoing dialectical experiencing process, like all theorizing, has within it certain assumptions and presuppositions. However, these are themselves dialectical in nature, i.e., they are to be found only within the process itself, as practical necessities, by entering into the actual process. They are emergent, fluid, interactional values, not a philosophy (not even a "process philosophy") but only a part of the process itself.

This is how Dialectic can criticize and challenge all theories and values. It operates on the level of the ideai that give rise to and govern theories and values, which, within its ongoing experiencing process are merely useful in the service of ideas, and not fixed ends in themselves. Dialectic seeks to destructure fixed theories and values so that inquiry can enter thoroughly into the human process of inner felt-experiencing, there to know self and the ideai

that govern the use of the self.

The true dialectical process is fully content free and imposition free. There are no preconceived notions, stances or agendas: only to follow truth and the spirit (Consciousness) through the attitude of love and acceptance and remembering who we are by following the experiencing where it truthfully leads. If you are following the drama of ideas where it leads and getting the picture (eidos, form) that emerges in the process, there are then questions that just naturally occur. Then there are specific skills of questioning for use with these - guidelines for precise and efficient questioning within what naturally occurs. The most general rule is to follow the emerging form where it leads - get the picture and stay with that as you go. A true question (whether it is verbal or non-verbal) is a joining with in inquiry, a respect for the process, an honoring of the person's natural knowing (which is yet to be fully unfolded, as the question takes hold and evokes a response of meaning.)

The dialectical interaction is simply learning the process of self-exploration and felt shifting, along with someone who lives the process, who by living that process along with the other person, passes it on with loving acceptance and skill. The teacher stays in the felt-experiencing of the emerging images, with awareness and discernment. This is the dialectical skill. In this he is

guiding by doing.

Dialectic is mutual shared true speech (logos); inquiry into and through the focused and shared felt-experiential presencing of Being. Mutual true speech takes place thus in unqualified spiritual love (philia) and in true functional moral centeredness (sophrosyne.) The primary requirement for the teacher is that he be living that moral inner experiential authenticity of presence. Teaching and therapeia proceed from there rather than from technique or capability or knowledge. The source and sustainment for the whole process is in fact a " not-knowing."

The Socratic process of exploration of self can be guided only by a person who has gone through this exploration in himself. It is not, and cannot be, a technique that can be learned or acquired and then applied. It has to be lived through, then lived out. It is the beingness of it that is lived, that is the person.

The external dialogue process, and trusting the flow of interplay and experiencing where it goes, helps to establish the internal dialogue and trust for the natural flow of life and experiencing, in both teacher and student.

In a way, this letting go and trusting the flow of experiencing (which is a conscious choice in the ongoing process for the teacher and then later for the student) is one of the most important happenings in the whole process.

Both learn in that process that they are not doing it, and shift from ego centered self-contraction to trusting that flow of life to lead the way and carry the process.

Learning to trust and letting life flow are learned in the very process of dialoguing. The process of Dialectic is not only a learning process. It is a process of learning to learn. By engaging in the dialogue, both parties engage in a process which itself engenders the process of spiritual soul-awakening in eros and logos, which then carries them beyond the immediate learning at hand. It is an awakening to a new way of being, of organizing self, and of acting.

In summary we can say that Dialectic, as experiential questioning in the drama of ideas, has all the right elements for best facilitating the process of fundamental experiential moral choice that we have been talking about:

1. The questioning allows the steps of change and opening to happen at a pace that comes right out of each successive step of felt shift and opening. Each step follows from what happened, experientially, in the previous step.

2. The process focuses directly, in steps that come right from the person, into the person's immediate felt-experiencing. This is both as Focusing/listening steps (that are, as above, guided by questioning that naturally paces according to these steps) and as happening within the subtle life-energy experiencing that is the fundamental and

essence of experiencing and of experiential change (as felt shift, experiential choice.)

3. The process embodies in its form and workings the greatest degree of empathic relatedness. In the steps and the questioning there is constant feedback to the person of what he is saying, feeling, expressing, etc. and the invitation to further unfold what he is reaching for. The dialectical questions do this, and specific empathic listening statements, within the dialogue, do this. (In this, the process is thoroughly "client-centered", process centered and relational.)

4. Within the dialoguing, the questioning and interaction allow for fine discernment and differentiation within the person's felt-experiencing. This is done through specifically Socratic type questions and statements (such as opposition, perspectives, differences, dividing, etc.), not for itself, but guided by the primary attitude (as in the Option Process) of accepting and trusting, while inquiring into the beliefs, etc. that are creating the various forms of unhappiness and limitation that the person is in. These questions clarify and differentiate this in very precise and pointed ways which can be very useful for the opening and shifting, leading then to the uncovering of ideai.

(This is the critical intellectual component [the "intellectual art"] of Dialectic. There is a dialectical interaction between this and the bodily feeling component.

These two are merely aspects of the one overall process.)

5. The dialectical method is one of unfolding and opening, through discrete and precise experiential steps. The process is entirely one of discovering, with no imposition whatsoever from outside. It therefore completely honors the student's learning to know and trust himself, and to follow his natural knowing, desires, purposes and ideai. It is a questioning into felt-experiential steps rather than a directing into them (as is the case in Focusing and other directed methods and of the synthesis, given earlier, in the section on "the art of choosing.) This creates the ongoing dialogue, honors the student's self-discovery the most, is the most empathic form of interaction and is the form that best allows for successive steps of carrying forward the experiencing.

6. There is a powerful dialectic between the destructuring of beliefs and the discovering of immediate bodily felt-experiencing, with the ideas for new possibilities for action and the moral power (arete) that this brings.

Any belief (limitation) is formed as a constriction in the body energy. The bodily felt sense holds the belief in some certain way that feels tight or constricted or something like this. The questioning of the belief is most effective when directed into that bodily felt sense. When the belief changes or lets go there will be a definite

bodily release or shift, giving the concrete experiencing of opening - of a living onward from there in greater freedom.

It is a questioning not just into beliefs and mental structures but also as the process deepens it is a questioning into the whole complex of felt meaning in which the beliefs may be lodged (the felt-experiencing in or under the beliefs.) There is a felt shift either way; in the second instance it is more aware and conscious, and the carrying forward of the experiencing is deeper. Facility at moving quickly through felt-experiential steps develops as this is practiced and done more.

There is a downward dialectic between beliefs and felt-experiencing, along with or followed by an upward dialectic of felt-experiencing and ideai, which is the process of the creation of meaning.

7. Within the discernment and differentiation process that takes place in the questioning there is the natural occurrence, within the belief structures, of the internal use of the person of the modes of representational systems. These can be played upon and used as a part of the discernment and differentiation of the structures and workings of the controlling beliefs. There can be patterning and repatterning taking place within the questioning, but with no imposition or manipulation or going for results (such as desired outcomes, as in NLP.) Honoring the person's own felt-experiential discovering is the chief

concern. This repatterning, as in the other repatterning disciplines, can be auditory, verbal, imagery, kinesthetic, emotional, body movement, etc. - any mode of imaging felt meaning.

8. There is a real relationship between the teacher and the student. The teacher's responses and questioning of the student come from his own felt-experiencing of the student's responses, and not from some program, plan, agenda or goal for the student. There is genuine feeling-interaction throughout. In this, the teacher may share with the student what he is feeling or experiencing in response to the student or something the student said or indicated. This is not a strategy to influence the student but a real response that carries the empathic dialogue forward. The student, dialectically, then, has the opportunity to respond further to the teacher's responses, and thereby carry forward his deepening of felt-experiencing in himself and in the developing relationship.

9. The attitude of love, acceptance and "being happy with . . . ", as the foundation of trust, relationship and of deepening the felt-experiencing into self and truth, is the governing and guiding principle of the whole process.

10. Caring for the soul (psyches therapeia) is the intent of the whole process and method. This means, caring attention always to the immediate felt-experiencing, to the truth of desiring (eros), to the purposes (telos) coming out

of the experiencing, to the felt meanings (ideai) that arise in the process, and to the broad life-energy experiencing (psyche) that is always there to be attended to.

This is at first the responsibility of the teacher, as he is leading the student toward this; later it is their mutual responsibility and activity.

11. Care to always follow the movement (of inquiry, of life-energy, of self) where it leads and to never impose on this in any way.

12. The felt shift from the belief structures to direct bodily felt-experiencing, and constant reinforcing of this, as constituting the fundamental deep experiential transformation.

13. The use of ideas (ideai), dialectically, in a motion back into felt-experiencing, to carry the experiencing forward to new possibilities. Again, this is always within the accepting and loving questioning and never as an imposition. Ideas are not beliefs but experiential choices; here they are tested, checked back as in Focusing within the bodily sense, and then used as organic instructions (new directions) for further experiential steps.

14. The whole process constitutes a felt-experiential shift from limitations, beliefs, ignorance and unhappiness, to living freely and happily from immediate felt-experiential knowing, in the use of ideas and with the

energy of true heart-desire (eros) and the effectiveness of secure moral power (arete).

15. There is an honoring and the dialectical interaction of all aspects of experiencing and action: feelings, life-energy, thinking, intellect, emotions, body movement, physiology, etc. so that the whole range of being of the person and his action comes into play.

16. At appropriate times in the dialoguing, the teacher may introduce suggestions for possible further experiencing or inquiry. These may be in the form of stories, anecdotes, myths, legends, jokes, tales, or whatever, that enable the introduction of ideai in a way that is in the flow of the process and experientially acceptable (meaning that they suggest or open the way into further felt-experiencing.)

These appropriate times may be moments of aporia, when the student is at a loss, seemingly stuck or in a quandary after having let go of some belief or structure that he had previously relied upon for safety or identity. This is a time when a felt shift is possible with some new idea (new possibility introduced.)

This is a suggestion for further experiencing, coming from the teacher's own feeling-engagement in the relationship and interaction, and not a manipulation for results or outcomes. It is only to suggest a path for further inquiry and discovery within the student. The outcome is always unknown, always to be unfolded as a felt

meaning from within, from further experiencing. Any desire for an anticipated outcome is surrendered into the immediacy of the relational presencing and the inner felt-experiencing.

17. The whole process is grounded in and played out within the life-energy. This is its soul, its actuality as precise concrete experiencing, its power (in the subtlety and the intentionality from this level), and its fulfillment (the feeling of experiencing on this level, and the reality of what this energy is in its awakened state - wholeness of being as psychic presence (psyche)).

See and realize how much all the experiencing you are doing in this process of self-inquiry is in the life-energy! All the movements in this process are movements of that - the spirit moving in and through life in pure silent felt-knowing. This flow of spirit is in all of the aspects of Dialectic that we have been investigating. It runs through them all, and in the deep experiential inquiry process it is awakened and starts to move as a unity and wholeness (which is to realize itself as it is, now recollected.)

18. Fundamentally it is the active loving trusting engagement in the relationship that does the work of transformation. This is why staying with the empathic dialoguing at all times is first and foremost. Anything else, methodologically, must be merely an adjunct to this and subordinate to it as the first rule of practice.

19. The Option Process shows the basic nature and thrust of the questioning and the type of questions to ask for this; Socratic method creates precise and clear differentiation within this questioning in the process of deepening felt-experiencing (anemnesis).

Socratic Dialectic has scope, range and purpose beyond that of Option Process dialogue. However, the use of Socratic Dialectic is and must be governed by the empathic acceptance and relationship principle that is so clearly articulated and practiced in the Option Process. These are Socratic principles as well but could be lost sight of in the critical intellectual and metaphysical thrust of the Socratic process.

20. The teacher is as much if not more involved in the process of transformation, and engaging in the process of transformation by his teaching activity, as the student (cf. Alcibiades Major.)

21. The starting place for questioning doesn't have to be some seeming unhappiness, as in the Option Process. The leading edge of any experiential step of growth or learning has some discomfort, uneasiness or sense of strangeness and newness about it. Whatever it is that may characterize this leading edge of the new forming can be the starting place.

22. The whole thrust of Dialectic is that of going beyond - of transcendence. Going beyond conventional limitations, beyond unhappiness and beliefs, beyond self-

definitions. Practically, this means questioning into any and every limiting belief, attitude, structure of behavior and the like.

23. The dialoguing can be verbal or otherwise (non-verbal body movement, for instance.) The method is a unique, distinctive and unitary method of experiential Focusing within the subtle bodily life-energy, guided by Socratic dialoguing. This is the form and pattern of the experiential philosophical approach to engendering the process of human transformation (metanoia.) And this form and pattern is the guiding principle and rule for the experiential questioning that enacts it and brings Dialectic to life.

Conclusion. The Socratic dialectical process of felt-experiential questioning, then, brings together all facets of organic functional learning into a distinct approach and method for facilitating the central moral/spiritual act of fundamental experiential choice that is the heart of the transformation of eros in the discernment of idea which most essentially characterizes Plato's Dialectic (according to the practical functional interpretation that we have been going by all along in this paper.) In doing this, the activity of essential experiential questioning both unifies the many functional learning disciplines into a workable integrity of idea and practice, and embodies the spirit of Socratic moral inquiry. We thereby have a vision (idea) of

the method we have been looking for throughout this paper: the idea of Dialectic.

Conclusion: The Idea of Dialectic

In speaking of the discoveries and techniques of F.M. Alexander, John Dewey stated that

his procedure and conclusions meet all the requirements of the strictest scientific method, and that he has applied the method in a field in which it had never been used before - that of our judgments and beliefs concerning ourselves and our activities. In so doing, he has . . . rounded out the results of the sciences in the physical field, accomplishing this end in such a way that they become capable of use for human benefit. It is a commonplace that scientific technique has for its consequence control of the energies to which it refers. Physical science has for its fruit an astounding degree of new command of physical energies. Yet we are faced with a situation which is serious, perhaps tragically so. There is everywhere increasing doubt as to whether this physical mastery of physical energies is going to further human welfare, or whether human happiness is going to be wrecked by it. Ultimately there is but one sure way of answering this question in the hopeful and constructive sense. If there can be developed a technique which will enable individuals really to secure the right use of themselves, then the factor upon which depends the final use of all other forms of energy will be brought under control. [135]

Dewey asserted that Alexander had done just this, and that the possibilities for human growth and betterment suggested by this method contained "the premise and the potentiality of the new direction that is needed in all education." [136]

The main criteria that Dewey is talking about for determining scientific validity for a method are that

1. general principles of understanding develop at the same time as and in reference to specific consequences that follow directly and concretely from these principles, as effect from cause, 2. that this relationship of principle and consequences be verifiable in experience, and 3. that the method itself provide the operational means for making evident and observable what the consequences are, guaranteeing that the consequences that are observed do in fact flow from the principle. [137] In examining Alexander's method he found that the principles that he enunciated always arose out of very definite experiential situations, in the closest connection with the observation of consequences in the actual operation of his method, and that the consequences and principles were used as means to test each other experimentally. Every step of the process was thoroughly analyzed and clearly formulated into new refinement of theory and method, which were in turn used to discover new experiential material for analysis and formulation. This procedure, according to Dewey, conforms to the most exacting standards of scientific method.

This carries the exact and demanding standards of validity in the means of gaining knowledge into the area of human conduct and action that Alexander was dealing with. It also holds good for other methods and researches in the functional learning disciplines which follow those rigorous standards, so that it is not just Alexander's method that is

scientifically valid for research into human action, but any method which applies the same care and precision of procedure in meeting the criteria of validity. Thus, the whole field of somatic research may be held to be a strictly scientific endeavor insofar as it adheres strictly to the exacting standard exemplified by Alexander's work.

Dialectical method brings out the implicit central aims of the other functional disciplines and completes them in this way. It goes beyond any of these disciplines in bringing the self-experiencing to the most fundamental energies of the self, out of which all actions and experiences are guided and organized. The result is a true dialectical science.

The dialectical method of learning that I have presented in this paper, then, may make the claim of being a valid, scientific method of research in the human, experiential field, building as it does on the disciplines of functional, somatic learning. As can be seen in the steps of practice (in the section on "The Art of Choosing"), it arises out of the examination of experience, discovering principles of action (ideai) which govern that experience and lead to definite and specific consequences, which are in turn checked against the principles. The whole method is an act of correlating principles with consequences that flow from them, with systematic modification according to the test of experiencing, until the principle (the idea)

exhibits a very clear and definite determining relationship to the results of action, as cause to effect. The determining of ideal out of experiencing and the correlation of these with their specific consequences, is experienced and realized in the actual operation of the method itself, making that method valid as a means of gaining knowledge.

The dialectical method not only shares the scientific validity of the functional, experiential methods that take their inspiration from Alexander's research, but carries that research into human conduct into the deep-feeling essence of human being, knowing and acting. The somatic disciplines, including Alexander's, have dealt mainly with how we use ourselves in patterns of body movement, conduct and behavior, working toward the integration of human structures, systems and functions. Dialectic leads our experiencing into how we use ourselves in our most basic motives - our deep needs, desires and feelings (the most basic energies of our experiencing: eros) and our longing for happiness, aiming for moral transformation in the whole structure of experiencing and erotic integration in accordance with proper ends (telos) and our truest values. This is the level of human experiencing that governs and directs the use of all the other energies of the self. Human functional ability (arete) is organized around this. The functional learning disciplines are incomplete without the explicit development and use of this dimension, and are

bound to fail in their (implicitly) highest aims, at least to a great extent, without it. The acknowledgement and use of this dimension can lead these disciplines on to their proper ends and fullest uses, so that the combination of Socratic inquiry and functional method can result in a true dialectical science.

When Freud took a long hard look at the love, the passions, the attraction, the desire and the drives that motivate people from their deep selves, he was in the process of rediscovering the teleological dimension of ancient science that has been lost or driven into the occult in modern times. The science of antiquity, epitomized by Aristotle and Galen, recognized four "causes" or principles of functioning at work in any natural process. [138] They looked upon nature as a living, creative process (phsyis) that had the same principles in its action as any artistic process. Just as, for instance, a sculpture consists of 1. the materials from which it is made, 2. the mechanical, structural relationship of the parts that make it up, 3. the functional pattern which is perceived as its form, and 4. the idea which it exhibits, that governs the putting together of its materials, structure and form; any natural process exhibits 1. a material cause, which is the material stuff from which it is made, 2. an efficient (or mechanical) cause, which consists of the forces and action of the parts and their interrelationships, the structure and arrangement

of parts, 3. a formal cause, which is the patterns of action and functioning of the whole process, taken as an integral unity, and 4. a final cause, which is the idea or intent in the process which organizes its action and directs it toward an end (its telos.) Modern science has dealt exclusively with material and efficient causes, mainly because the proper understanding of formal and final causes had been lost or obscured.

When Freud discovered motives in actions he had rediscovered final causes in natural process, specifically the human natural process that we are interested in researching scientifically through dialectical inquiry. He found, and elaborated in his many writings, that the basic organizing principle or idea (final cause) of human action and experiencing is erotic and passionate, that the fundamental impulses and energies that move us into action are driven by the need and desire for pleasure and happiness on a deep, somatic level of our experiencing. Eros is the energy of life that impels us in the directions we take. All other factors in life, all the energies of our body selves (and the elements of the other three causes) are animated by the striving toward erotic ends. The natural course of human growth and development is to integrate the various and divergent impulses of the whole felt-experiential process into a unified directed action in love and work, driven and empowered by the force of eros. The

many instincts and impulses that are found in the natural human process (the "primary process") need to be integrated in order to function properly and in harmony. [139] The organization and governance of human process is essentially erotic.

This is the same insight that operates in dialectical learning. It is eros in both the student and the teacher that leads to the discernment of ideai and the transformation in the experiencing that makes proper use of the self possible. Dialectic makes use of the scientific methodology of the functional somatic disciplines for working with final causes in human process. Dialectic goes beyond these disciplines in the investigation of the possibilities for "creative conscious control" (Alexander's term) in human living, to the most basic energies and principles which govern that ability to control. The functional somatic learning disciplines deal mainly with patterns within the process (formal causes) and the integration of human functions. Final causes are only implicit in their operations, if present at all. Dialectic makes the dimension of final causes explicit and its main concern. It thereby takes the new direction in scientific inquiry which these disciplines represent and carries it a step further to the explicit investigation and use of final causes in the human process which are the governing and organizing principles of the process - the moral ideai in

the process which make it specifically human. As the move into the scientific investigation of the control of human action through somatic functional inquiry was promising and needed, so the move beyond this into the experiential investigation into eros, idea and telos is necessary, for in the final analysis there can be no real and complete functional integration of the human deep experiential process without the essential erotic, ideational and teleological integration which Dialectic aims at. Human materials, systems, structures and functions are organized and animated by the final causes of human moral purposes. Any natural learning method or research methodology that fails to recognize this is bound to fail to be a fully human moral endeavor, and thereby also ultimately fail in its main aim of organizing and integrating the use of the self. The explicit acknowledgement and use of this dimension of moral final causality can lead the natural learning disciplines on to their proper ends and fullest uses.

The scope of dialectical inquiry is the whole field of human action. The action to be inquired into could be anything that a human is capable of doing, or even thinking or imagining (for these are ways of doing also.) In Plato's Dialogues we see the dialectical action at work in politics, ethics, statesmanship, rhetoric, cosmology, theology, mathematics, physics, and many others. Any field of academic study is a doing as well as a content area.

Learning to do the discipline of the field of study is more important and serves the student better than exclusive attention to the contents. So, the action or discipline of any of the traditional arts or sciences can be a starting place for dialectical inquiry. Any art or craft is also an obvious example of human doing. The dialectical investigation of these forms of human action could easily lead into experiential insights into the essence of the creative process and the consequent liberation of right doing, to better embody the original creative impulse. Any action that a person does, which he can put his attention on, as in step I (in the section of "The Art of Choosing"), can be a place to start. You start from just what you are doing, whatever it may happen to be, and you go from there. Whatever draws your attention is the natural starting place because the initial attraction of attention is the first impulse of eros which makes the process happen.

Socrates went out into the marketplace in Athens and talked with people about whatever came up, skillfully leading the conversation into moral inquiry and the discovery of ideai. This is what any Socratic teacher does. He enters into deep conversations with people about their lives, starting right from where they are now in their present experiencing, and skillfully following that experiencing wherever it leads. Since ideai are present in all experiencing as its governing and organizing principles

(or final causes), this inquiry naturally and spontaneously leads to them, through careful, discriminating, experiential tracking and questioning. So, whatever a person can distinguish in his experiencing that makes the slightest bit of difference ("a difference that makes a difference") can be an opening to an idea that can dialectically lead to a deep moral/spiritual transformation.

The practice of Dialectic takes any human action as the opportunity to transform the basic structure of experiencing and to liberate the original natural intelligence and presencing of the whole being. This is the process that Plato called anemnesis (remembering, recollecting.) Anemnesis means following the experiencing dialectically where it leads, and that is to a remembrance of your true natural telos, and of the ideai that inform your process. Through this you come to know yourself and be centered in your own experiencing. This makes the arete (right action, proper use, excellence) specific to human living possible, which is the clear flow of energy (eros) in every intent from impulse to execution; the perfect coordination of eros, eidos (form, function), telos (end, aim), idea and technai (skill or means-whereby) as apprehended and directed by nous (natural intuitive intelligence.) The specific intent of dialectical learning, then, is moral, in the sense of finding the proper means of right action (human arete) by remembering who you are. The

essence of functional learning and the only real morality is to come to know yourself and be centered in your own experiencing (a state which Plato called sophrosyne.) In this you learn to manage or use well, through clear and right discernment in action, those fundamental energies of self upon which the final use of all other forms of energy depends.

So, dialectical inquiry, in the form that we have presented it here, is a scientifically valid means of gaining knowledge. It is science in the original, functional sense of episteme, direct experiential knowing of final causes, and the knowledge thereby gained is a moral experiential knowing of self and the action of self. Dialectic is therefore a moral science in the most fundamental and far-reaching sense: it holds out the real possibility of attaining creative conscious control and mastery of self and its energies in all acting and experiencing, for the realization of enduring happiness through the fulfillment of the ends of action and the end (telos) of living. In this its character as the practical science of essential human action it is the scientific foundation of a truly liberating, dialectical liberal education. That is the idea of Dialectic.

Attaining a view of the idea of Dialectic has been the aim of this paper. That idea, like any idea, then becomes the guiding principle of effective action. In this case,

that action is the practice of Dialectic. Through the idea of Dialectic as functional experiential method, we now have a sure guide and inspiration for deep moral transformation through Socratic dialectical inquiry.

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109. Gerald Weinstein, "Asking the Right Questions," Journal of Humanistic Psychology (April 1980).
110. Gendlin, The Experiencing Scale.
111. "Organic Instruction" is functionally equivalent to "direction for the use of the self." For this, see Arthur Lessac, Body Wisdom: The Use and Training of the Human Body (New York: Drama Book Specialist, 1978). In Lessac's method of somatic functional learning there is more of an emphasis on redirecting self through choice of experiencing. This emphasis makes it most valuable at this point in the inquiry when we are carrying the understanding of the experiential felt shift into finding the possibility of choosing within the Focusing steps.
112. This is drawn mostly from Wellman, "Eros and Education," "Socrates and Alcibiades," and "Plato on Education."
113. Plato, Alcibiades Major.

114. Gallwey and Bob Kriegel, Inner Skiing (New York: Bantam, 1974), p. 65.
115. Philip Friedman and Gail Eisen, The Pilates Method of Physical and Mental Conditioning (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1980), p. 140.
116. Plato, Dialogues; Wellman, "Eros and Education."
117. Plato, Alcibiades Major; Wellman, "Socrates and Alcibiades."
118. Ronna Burger, The Phaedo: A Platonic Labyrinth (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1984).
119. For this see Gendlin, "Imagery is More Powerful with Focusing."
120. Karlfried, Graf von Durckheim, Daily Life as Spiritual Exercise: The Way of Transformation, trans. Ruth Lewinnek and P.L. Travers (New York: Harper and Row, Perennial Library, 1971).
121. Klein, Meno, Trilogy.
122. Burger, Phaedo.
123. See Robert E. Cushman, Therapeia: Plato's Conception of Philosophy (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1958), for a discussion of Dialectic as psyches therapeia, in the classical sense.
124. Richard Robinson, Plato's Earlier Dialectic, 2d ed., (London: Oxford University Press, Clarendon Press, 1953).
125. Gadamer, p. 93
126. Robinson, p. 77.
127. Gadamer, pp. 93-94.
128. Ibid., pp. 99-100.
129. Ibid., pp. 112-113.
130. Ibid., p. 122.
131. Robinson, p. 49.

132. Gerasimos Xenophon Santas, Socrates: Philosophy in Plato's Early Dialogues (Boston and London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979), p. 84.
133. Ibid., pp. 72-75.
134. See Gendlin, Analysis of Martin Heidegger, What is a Thing? (Chicago: Regnery, 1967), pp. 292-296.
135. In Alexander, Resurrection, p. 180.
136. Ibid., p. 184.
137. Ibid., p. 174.
138. Buchanan, The Doctrine of Signatures.
139. Freud, Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality.

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