

THE HUMAN POTENTIAL MOVEMENT IN MONTREAL: REFLECTIONS IN RETROSPECT

For the past two years so-called Human Potential Movement activities have nourished and vitalized my life, and been an important aspect of social and professional inter-change. Montreal has been my home during the years that I've been meditating my way through the "Guru scene", and experiencing transpersonalized altered states of consciousness. I have also had opportunity to serve as Chairman of the C.G. Jung Society of Montreal, and have had two years of workshop contacts with organizations such as the Association of Humanistic Psychology, International Institute of Integral Human Sciences (IIHS), and the Canadian Institute of Psychosynthesis, among others.

With all these kinds of things surrounding and penetrating my life, it feels appropriate to share some feelings, thoughts, and intuitions on how I see Humanistic psychology activities in Montreal. In particular, I wish to use this opportunity to share some personal insight on what function an A.H.P. newsletter might play in Montreal from this point in time, and beyond.

To some who may be less familiar with Humanistic psychology organizations in Montreal, perhaps some introduction, by way of overview, may be helpful.

The C.G. Jung Society of Montreal, an old love of mine, is dedicated to exploring facets of Jungian/archetypal psychology. There are lectures and workshops periodically, as well as courses on Jungian thought. The Jung Society has in the past, and will continue to encourage co-sponsorship of Jungian-oriented programmes with other organizations. Its programming is for both professionals and non-professionals. (There is also a French-speaking group, Le Cercle de Psychologie Analytique.) The Jung Society edits a newsletter. Membership forms and information are available from Alice Johnston, 38 Anwoth Road, Montreal; 935-1440.

The International Institute of Integral Human Sciences is a parapsychology institute dedicated to research and teaching, for both the general public, and specialized professionals. Annual conferences have been held the past two years on "Meditation, Mystical and Psychical Experience and Non-Medical Healing" and "Life, Death, and Psychical Research". A variety of courses and workshops are offered throughout the year, as well as the occasional public lecture. In addition, there is an inter-disciplinary graduate program being developed, specializing in doctoral training in parapsychology, non-medical healing, Eastern psychologies, psychophysical research, etc. The Institute's mailing list is one of the most comprehensive in Montreal for New Age/psycho-spiritual activities, in Montreal, Eastern U.S. and Canada. John Rossner and Charles Small are directly involved in administration of IIHS. For information try 2130 Bishop Ave.; 879-8589.

The Canadian Institute of Psychosynthesis is a training institute based on the transpersonal psychology of Roberto Assagioli. The Institute itself has been concerned almost exclusively with the training of professionals. There are many qualified psychosynthesis-trained facilitators doing work with personal growth groups as well as individual sessions. A number of individuals involved with the Canadian Institute of Psychosynthesis - Rosemary Sullivan and Alanna Hartzok in particular - have made significant contributions to the expansion of Human Potential/New Age activities in Montreal. Martha Crampton, Director, is presently establishing a land-based training centre in Mansonville, Quebec. For information: 3496 Marlow Ave.; 488-4494.

The R.M. Bucke Memorial Society for the Study of the Religious Experience is a small group which meets for monthly discussion and seminars on related aspects of psychology and religion. Dr. Raymond Prince, founder of the Society can be contacted c/o Mental Hygiene Institute, 3690 Peel Street; 844-3971.

The Gestalt Institute of Quebec has been in existence for a number of years. The main emphasis is on Gestalt training for professionals. Individual counselling and group workshops are also available. Don Horne, founder of the Gestalt Institute, can be reached at 5210 Ponsard Ave.; 489-7055.

The Adlerian Psychology Association of Montreal is a small-sized organization dedicated to the study of Adler's psychological theory. Study groups and an occasional lecture are the Association's programming. For information contact Lillian Bensinger at 4939 Grosvenor Ave.; 731-5675.

Besides these organizations there are, no doubt, others. There exists a nexus of individuals trained in massage, primal therapy, transactional analysis, arica, rolfing, and other mind/body therapies. There is need to compile a more extensive resource list of these various individuals offering

specific services to the community. Perhaps a New Age community centre, or a New Age Yellow Pages might make it easier to focalize these energies and resources.

There are also a wide variety of Eastern spiritual communities with centres in Montreal. Unfortunately, it is not possible to elaborate specifically on these organizations at the present time. Suffice it to say that Yoga, Tai Chi, Sufism, Tibetan and Zen Buddhism, and other Eastern teachings are available in Montreal. While the Eastern spiritual community has often been subsumed under what Humanistic Psychology conceived of itself to be back in the 1960's, the Transpersonal school of psychology has actually done more to integrate Eastern and Western psychology than its predecessor has been able to do. In Montreal, if you want to check out an Eastern spiritual community, try the telephone book (Yoga is listed in the Yellow pages), the Saturday's Montreal Star, or the nearest bulletin board. There are many Gurus passing through La Belle Province.

And so, reflecting upon the resources available for psychological/spiritual awareness, it appears that there is plenty to choose from for all of us on the Path. The spiritual supermarket in which one can play the game of New Age dillitantism exists here, as throughout urban North America. The manifesting higher consciousness of the Aquarian Age is affecting Montreal, that is apparent for us all to see, and recognize. And there are many dedicated people involved with the different psychological and spiritual organizations and communities in this city.

One question which I have had for a long time is: "How can we integrate these different organizations, facilities, and resources more fully?". The Human Potential community / the New Age community / the spiritual community - the nomenclature is merely a convenience - consists of many individuals sharing a common vision of personal and collective wholeness. And perhaps this newsletter, or at least a modified version thereof, can serve the function of better integrating and disseminating information about New Age activities in Montreal.

Recently, through the planning of the Aquarian Festival of June 5, 1977, an Aquarian Network of almost twenty-five communities, organizations, and interest groups has been formed. If expanded to involve the Aquarian Network, and its related vortices of spiritual energy within the community, this newsletter can serve a valuable role of communication in the New Age community of Montreal.

The Human Potential Movement, as I see it, is well-established in Montreal. The many organizations mentioned above contribute wide and divergent approaches to personal growth, and offer activities to large numbers of people. Given the size of the English-speaking community in Montreal, and its conceivable decline in population in the coming years, I believe it safe to say that there is an active Humanistic psychology orientation in Montreal, with ample opportunity for further expansion.

Against this background, what role should the A.H.P. play? The nexus of inter-connection inherent in the quasi-structures of the Aquarian Network go far beyond what A.H.P. has classically considered itself to be. But today the needs of the growth community are quite different than 10-15 years ago when Humanistic psychology organizations were nurturing an embryonic seed.

Today, the movement for higher consciousness is far more expansive than we might have imagined it to become back in the sixties. There is, I believe, need for meta-organizations which can help integrate the divergent psycho-spiritual resources and facilities in Montreal. Both Vancouver and Toronto, for example, have made major steps in this direction with the establishment of a New Age community centre, and a New Age newsletter, respectively. In Montreal we have not yet established such organizations.

The possibilities for growth and re-definition of purpose of A.H.P. are limited only by lack of imagination or initiative. The experiences I have had through active involvement with the New Age community suggest to me that the time is right for A.H.P. to reflect seriously on its future role in Montreal. The so-called Aquarian Age of higher consciousness is a time of group sharing and inter-action. What role can the A.H.P. serve in manifesting this vision?

And so, with summer coming on, the time has arrived for reflection and inner contemplation before A.H.P. collectively, and the individuals involved in the association, personally, take the next leap of consciousness. Where to from here? Perhaps the summer solistace will reveal. Shalom.

Steven Pauli