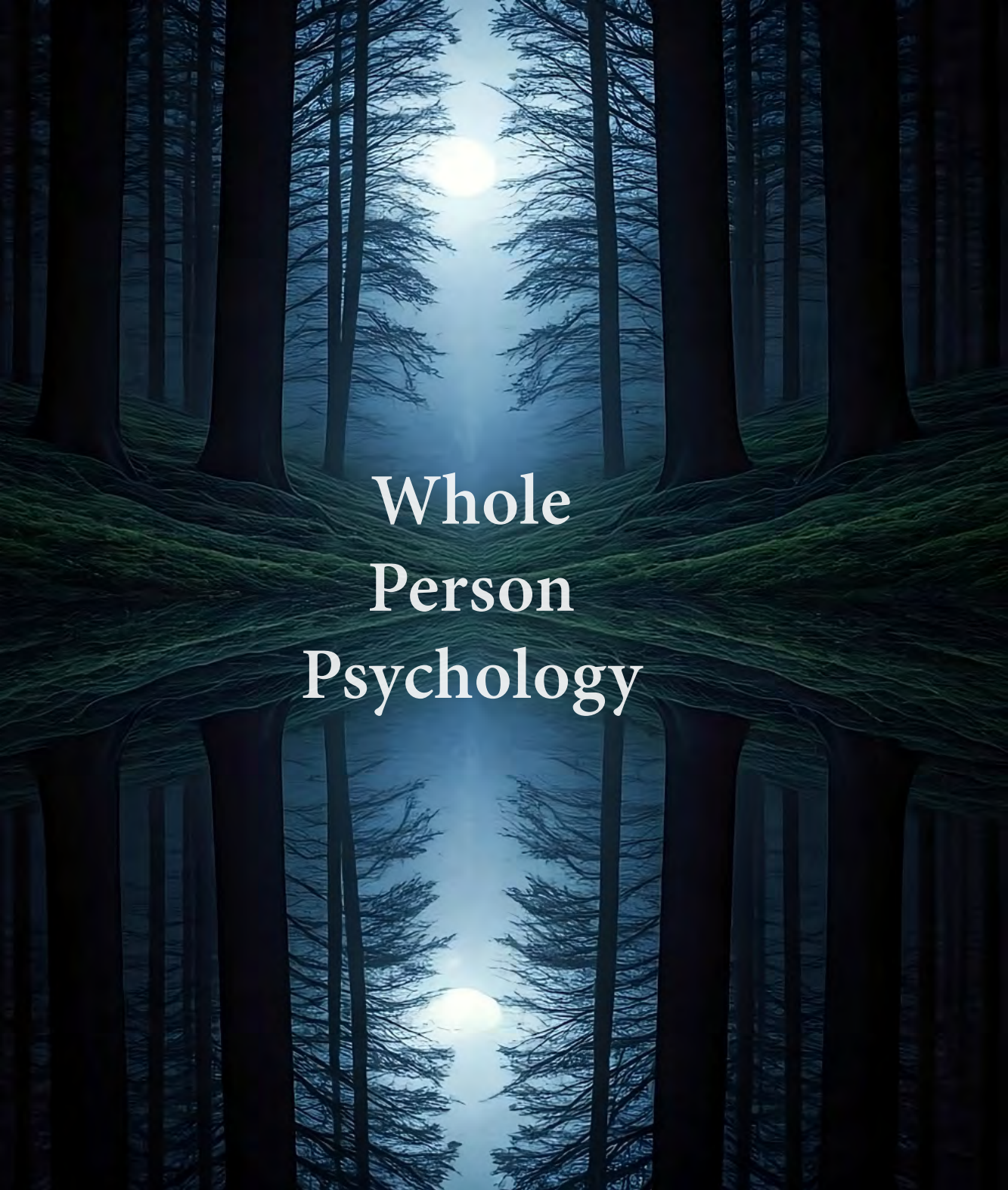


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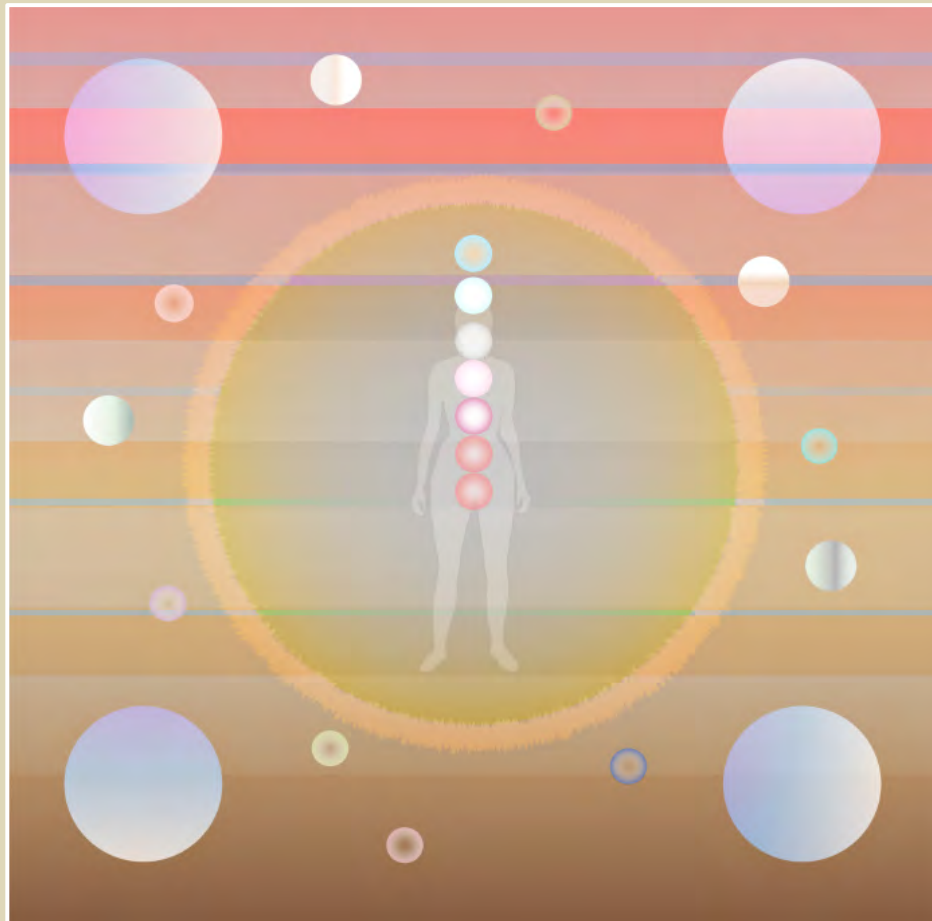
JOURNAL OF THE INTEGRAL YOGA OF SRI AUROBINDO AND THE MOTHER



Whole
Person
Psychology

The individual existence is a canticle perpetually renewed, that the universe offers to the inconceivable splendor of the Divine.

—The Mother, *Words of the Mother II, Collected Works of the Mother*, vol. 14 (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust, 2004), p.18



"Sun Human Centers." Digital art by Margaret Astrid Phanes

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"Inner Forest." AI digital Image by Vishnu Eschner / Grok

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Contributors

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JAN MASLOW has studied medicine, social work, and organizational psychology at the graduate level. She has incorporated mindfulness and dialogue practices to help create a more cohesive, collaborative, and effective workplace, and co-authored with Don Salmon a book on the yogic psychology of Mother and Sri Aurobindo.

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MARTHA ORTON has been a devotee of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother for many years, having lived in both the Sri Aurobindo Ashram and Auroville, and is the author of several books and numerous journal articles on Integral Yoga, including *The Quest for Knowledge and Mastery: A Comparative Study of Motivation in the Light of Sri Aurobindo; Oneness; Sri Aurobindo's Perspective on Reality & Other Essays*; and *Calling into the Dark* (poetry).

DON SALMON is a licensed clinical psychologist, has practiced mindfulness and other meditation techniques for over 45 years, and with his wife Jan, has written a book on the yogic psychology of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. He also has two certifications in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Insomnia (CBT-I), which he uses along with effortless mindfulness and Yoga Nidra to help people learn effortless sleep.

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BAHMAN A. K. SHIRAZI, Ph.D., studied and worked at the California Institute of Integral Studies (CIIS) for nearly four decades. Through the teachings of CIIS founder Dr. Haridas Chaudhuri, who brought Sri Aurobindo's teachings to the West, he discovered Integral Psychology and Integral Yoga, which have provided the inspiration and guidance for his academic and spiritual paths ever since. Bahman is a member of the *Collaboration* editorial team.



EDITORIAL

Integral Psychology

INTEGRAL PSYCHOLOGY IS THE FIRST psychological framework to study the totality of the human experience, covering the entire body/vital/mental/psychic/spiritual spectrum, and all gradations of consciousness. It is essentially an experiential approach, with a transformative orientation in the service of individual and collective evolution of consciousness. This approach—which has also been referred to as integral yoga psychology, whole-person or holistic psychology, and more recently, consciousness-based psychology—is centered around the quest for wholeness as a central motive for human psychospiritual growth and development. Integral Psychology seeks to assist humanity in healing, transformation, and evolution toward divine life on earth.

Naturally, Integral Psychology is a vast field covering many areas such as transformation of consciousness and personality, healing and psychotherapy, human psychospiritual development and evolution, and psychosomatic integration, to name just a few areas. The whole-person framework can potentially bring new perspectives to several dozen fields of psychology including new perspectives on common clinical psychological issues such as trauma, anxiety, and depression. This issue of *Collaboration* offers only a thin slice of the field, mostly focusing on topics within the field of personality such as ego, soul, and transformation of personality.

Our first feature article is a reprint of chapter 3 of a recent book by Soumitra Basu and Michael Miovic titled: *Consciousness-Based Psychology*. This chapter which is titled “Rebirth in Consciousness: The Psychic Being,” is a substantive and detailed treatment of the evolving soul, referred to as the “psychic being” by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. The psychic being, which is a portion of divine

consciousness in the individual human being, is responsible for the evolution of consciousness as it carries the essence of our individual experiences from one life to the next and guides human evolution toward self-perfection. It plays a foundational role in the overall framework of Integral Yoga, and especially Integral Psychology, as the seat of our true individuality and as the catalyst for transformation and integration of ego-based personality. In addition to providing the basic background on the psychic being in Integral Yoga, Basu and Miovic cover some fascinating topics such as the journey of the soul, past lives and therapy, finding the soul, and karma.

The article by Don Salmon and Jan Maslow titled “A Gentle Shift of Attention: Why Surrender Alone is Not Enough,” brings our focus to the issue of personal effort vs. surrendering to the Divine. Salmon and Maslow state that while surrender to the Divine is a foundational practice in Integral Yoga, in the beginning and likely for quite some time letting go of the ego and complete surrender to the Divine are not practically possible. The authors suggest the practice of shifting our attention from ordinary identification with egoic activities in life, mind, and body, to silencing of the mind and focusing on the vastness and beauty of our true unbounded Being through practices such as self-inquiry and dis-identification with our surface consciousness. They offer several specific practices to this end.

Bahman Shirazi’s article titled “Ego as the Helper” focuses on the topic of ego in Integral Psychology. It builds on Sri Aurobindo’s description of the ego both as a helper and a bar. As a necessary evolutionary formation, the ego as the organizing principle of embodied personality has an important role to play in the course of psychological development of the individual human being. However,



Photo by Mo Eid / Pixabay

this function increasingly loses its significance after spiritual awakening—and especially during the later stages of yoga—and must be transformed and eventually replaced by the psychic being, which is the organizing principle of the whole being. This article examines the notion of ego as the helper in light of certain aspects of Western and Integral Psychology and argues that for the ego to be a proper helper we must deal with undesirable personality traits such as narcissistic, borderline, and schizoid traits—and in more extreme cases personality disorders—to avoid lopsided or misguided psychospiritual development.

Lastly, in “The Psychological Value of Prayer,” Martha Orton points to the profound effect that prayer can have in our psychospiritual development. In praying, we acknowledge that our ordinary egoic consciousness is not able to bring about the desired psychospiritual transformation, and that we can use prayer as a practice

of essentially surrendering to the Divine through a series of gradual stages of deepening the fullness of our faith. The act of praying can take several forms and may indicate various intentions such as supplication, longing and devotion, or even desperation or helplessness. However, the closest form of prayer to the psychic being is the prayer of aspiration, of seeking to become closer to the Divine. The author describes additional forms of prayer suggested by the Mother, such as prayer for inner opening, integral prayer (whole-person concentration on the Divine), and Radha’s prayer.

As usual we also offer some poetry as well as quotations from Sri Aurobindo and the Mother and other key figures in the field. We hope that this issue provides an insightful and useful window to the psychological wisdom of Integral Yoga.—Bahman Shirazi for the *Collaboration* editorial team