

# Social Integration

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I had my basic Breathwork training in 1979-80. I stayed in USA for six months and went to California to see Leonard Orr. I do not know how many Rebirthing sessions I made these six months but they were many. When I began to get more aquatinted with the power of breath, I thought, "This is gold". I really felt like my fellow Swedes who went gold digging in America 150 years ago. I struck lucky.

Already at that time I was interested in the idea of social integration - the strive for inner development to have an impression on the social structure. When I came home I wanted to save Sweden - all of it in one go - but the whole of Sweden did not want to be saved. Not by me anyway. So I had to save myself first. Then six years later, slowly and with help of fellow Breathworkers, we could start to "save" Sweden together, with our "Breathwork Training Programme". Another way of putting it is that it took me six years to get mentally grounded and socially integrated enough to be able to express myself in public. But since 1986 we have been running the Breathwork Training and so far we have trained around 800 people.

When we played with the idea of saving the country we made a sort of mathematical calculation to see how many people we reached and touched with Breathwork, including the spin off effect that occurs when one Breathworker starts to work with other people. The reality is that we have not yet reached 1% of Sweden's population. Maybe this will be our first goal. On the other hand I think our training programme has been quite successful with the social integration aspect. This success I think

is due to our common vision not to become a sect or a private VIP club. We wanted things to happen in the common reality, also known as society, which, as you known by now, has been my interest for a long time.

Why should we strive for this social integration? What is the purpose of social integration? My answer is that society will give you feedback on your behaviour, which is healthy for your growth. A reality-check if you wish. Another way of putting it is that reality is real. I know that we have seen discussion groups at this conference around the subject "*Thought is creative, is it?*" We are not the only people in history that have been discussing this issue. This discussion is actually recorded in Indian scriptures around 2,000 years ago. Open metaphysical debates between the three classical schools of thought, the Vedanta school, the Samkya school and the Yoga school. They were often discussing different issues. One really interesting debate concerned the meaning of the word "Maya" which in Sanskrit means "illusion". On this issue, Samkya and Yoga were on one side and Vedanta was on the other. Vedanta claimed that the physical reality, the physical universe, is pure illusion where as the Samkya and Yoga schools said that our way to perceive the physical universe is an illusion but it has a reality in itself.

This is also my standpoint. I believe that there is something out there, outside my head. When people use the words "*Thought is creative*", these days, you don't know whether they are coming from the Vedanta perspective or from the Samkya-Yoga perspective. You may not agree with me, but I perceive that "*The Course in Miracles*" is more like the Vedanta philosophy. "This chair does not exist", "This table is not really there", it is all pure illusion. I recommend that you find out for yourself to see from what perspective you come. Personally I come from the Samkya-Yoga perspective. I really care about the physical reality and it is obvious to me that if you want a good relationship with reality you better perceive it as real. This is my reason for being interested in society and also for being interested in real transformation. I have seen so called New Age development techniques as well as more traditional therapies helping people to create personal illusions to make them happy. I do not believe in teaching people how to create personal illusion.

I would therefore like to explore the essence of transformation. It is interesting to look at different techniques and methods to see what they say about transformation. It will inevitably lead to generalisations but I would still claim it to be generally true.

It would probably help our perspective if we divide the different kinds of development techniques and therapies into four categories:

TALKING, FEELING, TOUCHING and BREATHING

- the first category concentrates on talking and conceptualising. Here I include psychotherapy, psychoanalysis, counselling, consulting, etc
- the second category focus on experiencing and expressing emotions. The classical method here is primal therapy, but there are many other methods that can be brought into this category.
- the third is oriented towards physical touch. Here we have body-work and of course all various kinds of massage techniques, bio-energetic etc.
- the fourth category is Breathwork

*What do these different schools say about transformation?*

Well, people in the first category who use talk to change usually claim that insight is the key to transformation. If you get a clear insight about your problem you will change. Just to conduct a bit of scientific studying here - how many of you here have seen people with great insight and no change? Quite a few, I can tell by all the raised hands. So insight may not really be the key to transformation. Just because you get clear insight does not mean that you transform.

When it comes to feeling and expressing emotions the transformational key would be to relive. So if you relive this terrible traumatic moment that happened in your childhood, would you then be free of it and be transformed? Being scientific again - how many of you have the experience of reliving a trauma over and over again? Not so many hands this time. Maybe it is true then. Still, the way I see it is that this is not really the key issue. I have seen people relive their traumas over and over again with no noticeable change. If I include myself I can speak with absolute authority when I say that this is true!

As regards touching, the key issue would be to release tensions. If you release your tensions, transformation would take place. It is my experience that when I receive a bodywork sessions, I can have a beautiful blissful experience, getting a fantastic experience of heaven on earth almost. But sometimes it lasts one week, sometimes it lasts only one day, so for me it does not seem to be the key issue either.

But we mustn't only disclose mythology in other schools, we

must also look at ourselves. In Breathwork the key concept is opening the energy. In my experience, both personal and with my clients, it is fairly easy to bliss out with the help of Breathwork, focusing on energy. All problems are gone, until you go home and have the next encounter with your wife, husband, children or parents. What happened to the transformation in the Breathwork session?

I hope you are curious to find what the key issue is, if you have not heard me before. For me the key issue is to change both thought and behaviour. I think this is the real key issue. A therapy called cognitive-behaviourism has very good results. They don't care about insights, nor do they care about reliving, they don't touch the body, and they don't know anything about breath. Still their technique creates a lot of change. I had a medical doctor in one of my trainings. He was an expert in pain therapy. With the help of cognitive behaviourist therapy they could lower the use of painkillers by half. They could cut the medication by 50% just by getting people to change their thoughts and change their behaviours. But the weakness with the method is that it takes away the symptoms that might appear somewhere else in a different form. Although the physical pain has an emotional level underneath, they could still lower the pain by just changing thoughts and changing behaviour. But until the underlying emotional problem is addressed properly it could have a tendency to surface somewhere else in another similar situation whether it is relationships or communications problem or something completely different. Cognitive behavioural therapy replaces an undesirable conditioning by a desirable conditioning in so far as they make proposals, they analyse your thinking patterns and they propose other ways to think. They analyse your behaviour in certain situations and make suggestions to behave in a different way in that specific situation.

What I am aiming at is that all the methods I have mentioned are valuable. But if you don't look at changing your thoughts and behaviour at the same time it does not work. If you get all these beautiful insights and still go home and think negative thoughts about yourself or address your wife in the same manner as you always do, there is no change. The same applies to all methods. Breathwork can just be like a drug kick without side effects if you don't let it affect you thoughts and your behaviour. I suppose this is why the Rebirthing movement has talked about creative thought from the very beginning. But it

does not have to be done in a superficial way. It can be done in a very realistic and practical way.

It is sometimes said that when the energy moves it can change our thoughts but I'd say that when we move the energy we get aware of limiting thoughts. Your way of thinking and behaving creates psychological and physiological tension. If you release this tension in one breathing session but then go back to think and behave in the same limiting way you will eventually re-create the tension.

I strongly advocate this totality, to adopt a holistic perspective. All these methods reinforce each other. The work does not end in the workshop. There is homework to do as well. And if you don't do your homework you may well fail your exam, which is to participate in the flow of life and to integrate its essence into your being, flow and change.

In the holistic perspective, nothing in the whole universe has one single cause. Everything affects everything. You cannot even fart without affecting every galaxy in the whole universe. Now I know why my mother did not want me to do so. She was a very modest person and she did not want her son to affect the galaxies. Of course my minuscule influence on the universe as a child had a very minimal effect on the galaxies. So if you look for causes of anything, you have to look for main causes.

What are the main causes that create self-respect and social integration in the holistic perspective? To answer this I will use the symbol. (Fig.1). A star of self-respect and social integration.

It is my belief that self-respect is the basis for transformation. A friend of mine, who trained in Breathwork at the same time as me, later abandoned the Breathwork and went only with affirmations. She became a very successful therapist. Her trick is to start with affirmations about self-respect. Without a certain level of self-respect, no affirmations will work. But there are several factors to self-respect and social integration. To illustrate them I'd like to use the form of a star.

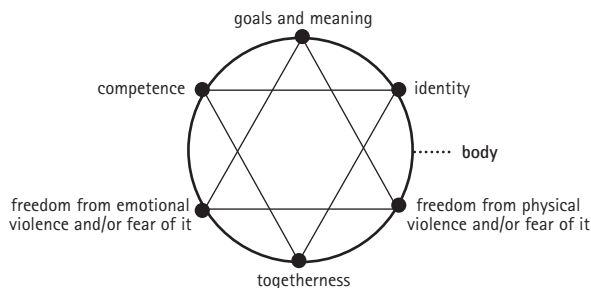


Fig 1.

The first factor is very basic. I call it freedom from physical violence and/or from fear of it. We know that the best way to give a child poor self-respect is to beat them up. It is very important when you work with clients to check if this is the reality for them. If they are living in a relationship where there is physical violence, or threat of physical violence, don't be surprised if the therapy does not work. Freedom from physical violence is to learn to put very clear limits to relationships but it is also about caring about the physical environment. Because the violence is real! If you live in a very violent neighbourhood you do not say to yourself, "How did I create this?" and "Maybe if I do some affirmations it will all go away." No, it doesn't work that way! But if you take physical action and maybe try to do something to change the physical violence in your neighbourhood, you care about your physical environment at the same time as you do self-therapy. This difference is important to notice.

The next factor is called freedom from emotional violence and/or fear of it. Freedom from emotional violence is also to check your relationships. Emotional violence is when people make each other feel guilty or constantly blame each other for wrongdoing and similar. Your client comes to you once a week and you give him or her a lot of attention, love and positive thoughts. The rest of the week s/he goes home and is fed with an abundance of negative thoughts and negative feedback. What you tell your clients does not work very well if you do not encourage them to also change their situation. So this is also about setting very clear limits to our relationships and communicating very clearly with our friends, or sometimes even changing friends.

The third factor located at the base of the star, I call togetherness. As human beings we have a basic need for togetherness with other people. Togetherness is about having a positive we-feeling, to belong somewhere where you are seen and welcomed and getting some kind of recognition. This could be a good family, a Rebirthing group, a religious setting, a sports club, or whatever brings you that positive we-feeling. Of course there are many levels of this positive we-feeling but it is extremely strong. This is often the reason why even very destructive groups such as skin-head-neo-nazi-associations or motorcycle gangs hold such an attraction to people who do not have any we-feelings with society. In these groups they become somebody. They receive individual recognition in the group. So the feeling of togetherness is very seductive. Here I'd like to

identify five different levels of group participation.

They are like different stages in our biological development as well as inner stages of psychosocial participation. We often jump between the different levels in the course of our development but also in different social settings.

The first stage I call dependent. The dependent stage corresponds to the very small baby that needs the mother constantly for its survival. There are many people who are stuck on this level in our society - people who can't do anything unless somebody tells them to.

The second level I call semi-dependent. It corresponds to a small child who needs its mother but also is prepared to make small private excursions.

The third level that corresponds well to most teen-agers I call counter-dependent. They are totally against their parents. They think they are free but they are still in some way dependent. This may well be a necessary phase in their development process, but they are stuck in being against. This level of participation is of course easy to find in our society.

The fourth level I call independent. Many people think this is the highest state but for me it is not. It corresponds to a young adult.

The highest state I call interdependent. It is totally different from co-dependent. This state corresponds to a mature adult - an independent adult that chooses to co-operate with others to achieve an even better result. That is a co-operative individualist. The co-operative individualist is not really dependent on others, for other things than to achieve practical results, for social, financial, economical, ecological or spiritual reasons. In fact, I think that Global Inspiration and IBF are fantastic examples of co-operative individualists coming together. This is one of the exciting aspects that bring me here. But co-operation demands more of everybody. It is easier to do things yourself, sitting in morning meetings, discussing various organisational topics, trying to find ways to agree at the end of each discussion. But when you finally succeed you often accomplish so much more. So my advice to you is - don't stay in the independent state. Go on and take up new challenges as they come your way. This is what I consider to be a high level of togetherness.

But let's return to our star so that we can complete it. The next factor I call competence. Competence means to be aware that you are good at something and to be willing to come out

with it and to get feedback from others, from real people. This can be extremely therapeutic. There are at least three ways to raise your competence. The first is to get clear about what you already know and what you can. The other two are more education and more experience. I have seen clients taking giant steps in transformation, just by starting a training course. They grow in self-respect. You could have continued to take them through 10 or 20 more breathing sessions but if you instead guide them and support them towards educating themselves in order to achieve what they really want, you will probably do much more for them.

The next factor I call identity. Identity is what most therapy is all about. To know who you are, know your wounds, know your longings and your behavioural patterns. Traditional therapy is of course very important although I consider Breathwork to be traditional too, these days. Or maybe this is still just an affirmation. Still I am sure that it will become a reality, as real as reality itself.

The top factor I call goals and meaning. Meaning in your life. Meaning answers the question "Why". Why am I living? Why did I get born? Why should I participate? Whereas goals have to do with "How", How do I want to participate? But of course these two border to each other, which is why they are together.

What I have described so far are six nice parameters but there is also a seventh, which is symbolised by this encompassing circle. This is the body. And it embodies all the others - to have a friendly relationship with your body. You are okay with the way you look and with your sexuality. You care about what you eat or drink. You care about giving your body massages, exercise, or whatever.

So here we have seven factors and again it has to do with balance. People often have a tendency to over-emphasise one aspect to compensate for the other. One example of this is high-level business people who are very competent. They are functioning well in society and have a good self-esteem. But if they lose their job, they may well fall apart. They often have a very low level of identity and maybe they lost contact with their family while they were involved in their career. People in therapy sometimes over-emphasise the identity factor. If you have a problem at home you go to get more therapy. I once said to a client, "You cannot breathe away your husband. Go home and talk to him and get clear on what you will do with your relationship." It worked, better than my breathing sessions.

I should perhaps add that all these methods work only if they lead you to change your habitual thinking and your habitual behaviour. All these methods are good but it is important to know what makes them work and what does not make them work. Any therapy can become just a repetitious escape from reality. "My life is horrible but I love my therapist. It's so nice to go there, he gives me such nice feedback and good attention that I never get at home." If you want to keep your blissful state even between the sessions with your therapist, you need to work on reality too.

The way to measure where people or clients stand as far as these various key issues are concerned is simply to interview them, to talk to them and try to find their specific imbalances.

Since we are talking about social integration, I also like to present a socio-economic model of our society, which also incorporates transformation, more today than ever. I know that this is very pretentious of me, but I must confess that I like this model very much, even if I am not totally addicted to it. I like to draw a map (Fig. 2) of how our society has developed. Since our time together is limited, we have to restrict ourselves slightly. We'll start 10,000 years ago.

	the farming society	the industrial society	the Information society	the Inspiration society
dominating tool	plough	machine	computer	body
common purpose	survival	prosperity/abundance	personal development	spiritual development "holism"
main production	food	goods/products	information	more life
strategic resource	land	cash/capital	knowledge	"human humans"
main form of organisation	family	company	network	"organic cooperation"
main sources of energy	animals and plants	coal/petrol and oil	brain	breath
main profession	farming	worker	entrepreneur	healer
means of production	local	mass production	individual	united efforts

Fig 2.

present time

10,000 years ago there was a great revolution in the human socio-economic setting. People started to farm the land. This was the start of the farming society. There are certain key factors that characterise the farming society. In the farming society, the most important tool is the plough. It brought about a great change for people. The common purpose in the farming society is survival. The main production is food. Of course they produce other things too but food is the main production. The strategic resource is land. The main form of organisation in the early farming society was the family. Not the small family we have today but an extended family. The main sources of energy were animals and plants. The main profession was of course farming. This was the reality in Sweden up until a hundred years ago. The majority of people were farmers. The means of production were mainly local.

Just a couple of hundreds of years ago, some countries started to move into the industrial society. The dominating tool here is the machine and the common purpose is prosperity or abundance. The main production is no longer food, it is goods or products. The strategic resource is cash or capital. The main form of organisation here is the company and the source of energy is coal, and later petrol and oil. The main occupation is manual work. The means of production is mass production. All this is significant for the industrial society. If we move from left to right on our map and move on to current time, we end up somewhere close to the end of the industrial society. We have not left it yet, but as you all know, we are moving fast into the Information society.

In the Information society the dominating tool is the computer. The common purposes here becomes personal development. The main production, when this society is in full blossom, is the production of information. The strategic resource is knowledge. The form of the organisation is the network. As you can see the IBF is already a bit ahead of the society in general. The source of energy is of course the brain and when this society is fully developed, the main profession will be the entrepreneur. Just think about the scenario where the majority of people are entrepreneurs. It means that instead of a majority of people being workers or working for a company they will start their own business. The means of production is mainly individual.

But what comes after this? Yes, even if we are not there yet, there is something ahead of us which to some extent is already apparent. If we know about it we can all more consciously move

on and support the process. So what do we do with all the information if we don't have inspiration? In my view the next era approaching will be what I would call the Inspiration society. It is a very optimistic scenario, it gives a good feeling to think about it, doesn't it? But what is significant of this society? The dominant tool will be the body. The common purpose will be what you either can call spiritual development or "holism", to expand consciousness according to a more holistic perspective, which of course includes spirituality. What will be produced in the Inspiration society? More life! The main production will be more life. A kind of immortality if you like.

As I told you already I have been interested in society for a long time and I have been very concerned about the ecological situation on the planet. My perspective on where we are going right now, is that we are really going downhill. I truly believe this is objectively true. We are producing more death and less life on the planet at this point in time. The ecological consciousness that has been raised in the last decades has made us go downhill a little slower. I am looking forward to the day where we reach the bottom and start to go up again. Producing more life is not only producing more life in your own body but also taking on ecological responsibility. What is the strategic resource in the Inspiration society? I call it "human humans", - human beings who are whole. Since we no longer can produce just a lot of information, we must embody it and live it out. This would be a great strategic resource. The form of organisation I call "organic co-operation". In the Inspiration society, this will be the main form of organisation. You will need a network and perhaps also a company, but there will be several organic corporations emerging everywhere. They will not necessarily come from a family or need a legal form like companies do and they will not necessarily be structured as a network. A good metaphor is musicians that come together. When a special set of musicians get together they will make unique music and produce a C.D. Then they will move on and do something else. In the organic co-operation we do not need as much structure. Things will happen spontaneously. The source of energy in the Inspiration society is of course our breath! And the main profession is the healer. The healer is somebody who produces more life, more life in the body, or somebody who is an ecologist and produces more life in nature, or protects or preserves natural life. The means of production are united efforts since if you unite your efforts you can make many more things happen, especially if you unite as

co-operative group of individualists. As you all know there is something magical with group energy. With good group energy everybody gets more than what they put in. Where does this extra come from?

I think this is what we need to do. Just because society is changing does not mean that we totally leave the old societies. We need to keep a foot in the farming society as well as the industrial society that is also producing valuable goods. In the Information society we use the computer to communicate with each other. This enables the Inspiration society to happen. To do personal development means that you need a lot of information. You also need contact, real physical contact, with people. In the Information society you are in contact with these people through your computers, E-mail and whatever you are using to build a very high-quality network. So at the moment we are preparing the way for the new society. In the Information society we will not necessarily have enlightened leaders, or enlightened people in power. Anybody in the Information society who has a vision or a good project can communicate their thoughts on the internet without using the usual media. Anything can be used creatively or destructively. Still, the plough you built for tilling the land to grow food for your family can if you want also be used to bang somebody on the head.

As you can see, I am still trying to save the world. I never really gave up, I just became more realistic. I realised I could not do it alone. I had to co-operate with people. And I am pleased to say that it is fun too. Someone said "It would be so easy to save the world if it was not for all of the people in it". I hope my beloved latest model will give you something of value. It works like a map where your personal values, ethics and highest ideals are the compass. Just take a look at how you can move through this map. Where are you now and what is your next step?

Thank you for your attention.