Collage Art and Spiritual Healing Modalities to Strengthen Women's Souls

A Research Paper

Presented to

The Faculty of the Adler Graduate School

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

the Degree of Master of Arts in

Adlerian Counseling and Psychotherapy

Robin L. Getsug

April 18, 2012
Abstract

“How does a collage of inspirational images and words merge with spiritual healing modalities to strengthen soul themes in women? This research explores art, yoga and soul. Definition is given to these understudied disciplines. Art/ collage, as a specific healing medium, are reviewed in depth, delving into how we create and view art, and its psychological impact on maker and viewer. The background of brain functions when creating art, practicing yoga and when meditative practices are explored. Collage as is examined for its merit as a means of narrative and illuminating one’s self-awareness. It is viewed in both traditionally quantitative and new qualitative methods. Color meaning and the history of tarot as healing modalities are researched. A focus on Kundalini yoga and an extensive study on the Loving Kindness Meditation highlight the effects on psychological well being. The soul, or authentic self, sheds light on self with regard to gender differences, with a focus on women. Self-affirmation is a powerful term that arose in the research repeatedly, as well as self esteem needs for women and girls. There are major parallels with the theories of Alfred Adler and Carl Jung which are revealed: life tasks, social interest, individuation, archetypes and individual and collective conscious. Finally, two studies that combine these modalities, and have successfully merged art, yoga showed positive impact on soul healing. More research is needed in this arena with importance given to the intuitive/perceptive people in our society: the artist, the dancer, the musician, the writer, and the yogi.
Acknowledgements

“An attitude of gratitude brings great things.” — Yogi Bhajan

It is a pleasure to express my profound gratitude to those who have helped me pave this new path to healing, the many who made this thesis possible. I wish to thank my mentors and friends in art, yoga, and soul realms who contributed interviews and teachings to this paper, Marlene De Lott, intuitive tarot reader, who encourages me to set my own destiny. Ta-Coumba Aiken, lifelong friend, healing artiste/mentor, and Hari Kirin Kaur, whose light has helped me move through the darkness and to believe in myself and the power of my own grace. When I heard a class in Art and Kundalini yoga, I knew I must go there, and the journey has taken me places I could not have imagined! I want to thank teachers and friends I have at Adler Graduate School: Craig Balfany for giving me the opportunity for the best internship one could hope for at Fairview Adolescent Day Treatment; I am blessed to have learned so much from the staff, Craig Balfany, Melina Weir, Erin Rafferty, Gene Nisja and Barb Overline, and especially the teen clients there, the greatest teachers. To Dr. Premo for pushing me beyond what I knew I was capable of on my research paper, a 15 page literature review turned into a 49 page paper. Earl Heinrich for being the resident APA guru! Erin Rafferty and Jere Truer who encourage and believe in me, even as life sometimes gets in the way, they see my strength, potential, and encourage my gifts. Jere, thank you for believing in the power of spiritual psychology, and for helping me move beyond psychic wounds. Erin, thank you for encouraging me to inspire with my own story and my own art, and for leading by example of how to be an Art Therapist who gives her gifts from the heart. To all my friends at Adler, my wish is that we form an Adlerian and Art Therapy community and support each other in this important work. I thank Eva Dreikurs Ferguson for helping me get to ICASSI and to have this opportunity for growth within a
supportive Adlerian community, and for the opportunity to see the worlds of Italy and Switzerland in the Summer of 2011. To those that encouraged me in my previous careers and life an encouraged my unique creativity, from Interior Design to my own arts business Momento: Adornment for the Home. And most especially to those people who invited me to be engaged in projects that utilize the arts to transform community and teach about social justice; Shawna Nelson, Mike Hoyt, Tammy Ortegon, Jodi Elowitz, Carol Sirrine and more. Your visions for bringing arts into your communities continues to inspire me. To my yoga communities, Audacious Alchemy, Shake Up your Chakras, Tracy Cielto and Tonya Knuttila, and now, new inspirations at Tula and other venues to combine the powerful forces of art and yoga. To Molly Cronin who has guided me for many years in healing. To my dear friends who know my soul, helped me in many ways shift from victim, to survivor to healer. Suzi (sister friend), on parallel journey since age 14. Marissa was my first view into the gift of working with developmentally disabled clients, by way of her profound love for her “little David.” My mom taught me personal resilience and the importance of serving others. My dad inspired me with his artistic view through the lens of a camera, and has shared generously the collage of my life in pictures. My grandparents especially my beloved grandmas, Pauline and Rose, my role models for feminine strength, love and resilience. June for a shared artistic vision. Linda, displays strength beyond measure, enjoying every moment to its fullest potential. Eva and my now blessed God baby Cora Michelle, teaching me resilience from a very young age. To both my brothers, both incredibly creative and talented, Aaron and Tony G. Tony has given me a steady stream of wisdom, advise, support, friendship and loving guidance. With the deepest love to my kids and my puppies. Sid and Remy, have healed me and my kids with their unconditional love, thanks guys! To my children, all of this is for you, to have a safe, loving, steady and blessed home together and to
celebrate with each other, through all of the changes, both disappointments and victories. We have each other and there is no question of our love for each other, and in you I find my greatest strength and teachings, Bayley, Miri and Levi, to you I dedicate this thesis project. You all are incredibly self aware and the strongest people I know! May we have many blessings together as we all grow together in art, yoga, and soul. Lastly I want to thank those who have informed this project through teaching me about; betrayal, failure, bullying, unkindness, unfairness, and broken promises. These gifts have pushed me to a strength I did not know was possible. These experiences have informed this project, this graduate school journey and new career direction. In this new path I am honored to work with in Art Therapy; the clients at Fairview, Pillsbury House, New Visions, Gillette Children’s, Lifeworks, Legacy Group, Highland Friendship Club, POC MS Support Group, and Family Alternatives. I know this list will grow beyond measure. The outcome, the design of an experiential project “Inher” peace, multimodal interactive card deck. This deck and journal will utilize art, yoga, reflection and affirmation to improve self esteem and self awareness in women and girls. This will be an interactive daily self- help tool that engages the user in an active way. This will be unique to other affirmation cards in that it will be engaging actively the participant with the cards, in art and yoga exercises. It will draw on inspiration from the wisdom of Carl Jung and Alfred Adler. My hope is that the cards help women and girls discover their true selves, trust in themselves, and develop their own unique inner wisdom, in the spirit of self discovery and self love. It has been my gift through major life transitions and emotional trauma and my wish is to share this powerful gift with others, so they may know their own strength, beyond what they thought ever possible.
Collage Art and Spiritual Healing Modalities to Strengthen Women's Souls

*How does a collage of inspirational images and words merge with spiritual healing modalities to strengthen soul themes in women?*

This literature review looks equally at the power of art/collage to heal, the psychology of art, and how both the viewing and making of art both connect with the soul to help achieve holistic balance. The study then delves into the practice of mind, body, spirit modalities such as: yoga, meditation, and creative visualization. These two disciplines; art (image) and yoga, individually have been found to be effective in connecting to one’s true soul. Thirdly Soul themes in women are defined and explored, framing soul to be concepts of true self and identity. Women holistically can achieve a state of positive mental, physical and spiritual balance. The significance of looking into the healing aspects of these modalities is that in combination with psychotherapy or without, this can be an effective holistic, self-healing daily practice to achieving soul integration.

**Glossary of Terms**

**Art/Collage**

*Creativity* - originality of thought, imagination. The ability to transcend traditional ideas, rules, patterns, relationships and to create meaningful new ideas, forms, methods, and interpretations.

*Collage* - an Artistic composition of materials and objects pasted over a surface, often with unifying line and color, an assemblage of diverse elements.

**Yoga/Meditation/Spiritual Modalities**

*Yoga* - is an ancient Indian body of knowledge that dates back more than 500 years. The word "Yoga" comes from the Sanskrit word "yuj" which means "to unite or integrate."
Yoga is about the union of a person's own consciousness and the universal consciousness (Evans & Abrams, 2005). Ancient Yogis had a belief that in order for a person to be in harmony with themselves and their environment, one has to integrate the body, mind, and spirit. For these three to be integrated, emotion, action, and intelligence must be in balance. The yogis formulated a way to achieve and maintain this balance and it is done through exercise, breathing, and meditation.

*Kundalini Yoga*-uses meditation, mantra, physical exercises and breathing. Kundalini is derived from the Sanskrit word that means “coiled up”. Kundalini energy is a latent creative energy that starts at the base of the spine. The word yoga comes from the word yoke, this equates everyday life infused with creative potential. Kundalini is a way of connecting to the soul through the body. Yoga is the joining and or yoking of cognitive, somatic, and socially engaged or service practices such as Seva.

*Seva*-selfless service to others, akin to Adlerian social interest

*Mantra*- in Hinduism and Buddhism, mystic words used in ritual and meditation Mantra is believed to be the sound form of reality or mind projection

*Mudras*- hand positions

*Chakras*-energy centers

*Asana*-sitting poses

*Prana*- visualization/breath

*Kriyas* – action or sequential set of exercises in Kundalini yoga
Soul /Self Themes

Soul- the spiritual principle embodied in human beings, all rational and spiritual beings, or the universe, a person’s total self, the moral and emotional nature of human beings, the quality that arouses emotion and sentiment

Self- the ego, that which knows, remembers, desires, suffers, as contrasted with that which is known remembered, united principle such as soul

Self-Affirmation-Individual Level - A psychological theory first introduced by Claude Steele (1988) with the premise that people are motivated to maintain the integrity of self.

Self-Affirmation – Collective Level. Self affirmations reduce threats to self, and can also reduce threats to the self on collective level when confronting threatening ideals such as prejudice, race, gender issues.

Self-Awareness- conscious of one’s own feelings, character, traits and behaviors.

Self-Actualization- implies the attainment of the basic needs of physiological, safety, security, love, sense of belonging, and self esteem.

Self-Consciousness- excessively aware of being observed by others, conscious of one’s own being

Self-Determination- without outside influence, freedom to live as one chooses, without consulting with others

Collage - Inspirational Images and Words

The medium of collage joins image and word in a visual narrative therapeutic view.

“The creation of an art collage from the soul is an inner journey that allows your soul to speak to you. Your soul’s inner voice can be heard through the images, feelings, and insights that surface.” Kathleen Carrillo
Psychology of Art and Aesthetics

The definition of Art Therapy from the International Art Therapy Organization (IATO) is that art has the potential to change lives and in profound ways. When words are not enough, we turn to images and symbols to tell our stories. In telling our stories through art, we can find a path to health, wellness, emotional reparation, and recovery. Art does have the power to heal.

The authors Sullivan and McCarthy drew their qualitative art aesthetic narrative from writings of Dewey, Vygotsky and Bakhtin. Those authors also refer to many other scholars who have studied the psychology of aesthetics. Art is looked at from the standpoints of individual perception and experience, cultural psychology, emotion, living art, aesthetic view, self-identity, the interaction with the art object. Art is viewed in a qualitative way and relation to self as either viewer or maker. Drawing on Gestalt psychology, Rudolph Arnheim, one of the most influential psychologists of classic artistic perception, examined the relationship between perceptual process and the art object (Arnheim, 1969 as cited in Sullivan & McCarthy, 2009). He was interested in how the viewer relates to art and how experiencing and adding personal interpretation provides insight in to their lives. Arnheim described psychological processes experienced in viewing art. For example Arnheim describes the De Chiricos painting “Melancholy and Mystery of a Street” in terms of technical painting properties that create emotions such as foreboding and unease (Arnheim, 1954, as cited in Sullivan & McCarthy, 2009).

Gombrich looked at the construction of a work of art and how the making is matched against reality. Gombrich believed art is constructing and manipulating images that viewer’s look at in relation to their own world view, through their own particular contexts of understanding, based on their cultural background (Gombrich, 1960, as cited in Sullivan & McCarthy, 2009). E. G. Johnson, when describing the art form of music as “the flow of human
experience, feeling and thinking in concrete and embodied forms” (Johnson, 2007, p. 239, as cited in Sullivan & McCarthy, 2009). He further described art as having life, growth, and unity.

Jay Shusterman described art as having an openness and wholeness, celebrating the intensity of a moment and the life journey (Shusterman, 2006, as cited in Sullivan & McCarthy, 2009). His analysis is built upon Dewey’s description of “art as experience”. Dewey and Bruner both paralleled a look at self, culture and emotion, shaping one’s view aesthetics. Benson argued that art draws us to moments of existence where the viewer may alter his or her self concept though interacting with art (Benson, 2001, as cited in Sullivan & McCarthy, 2009).

Dewey echoed his Russian counterpart, Vyogotsky describing the art object and the artist. The maker changes the object and object changes the maker (Dewey, 1934, Vyogotsky, 1925, as cited in Sullivan & McCarthy, 2009). The strength of a particular piece of art is based on its emotional content. If there is not enough emotion between art object and maker, it is merely a technically correct piece of art or craft. The object is not enriched if there is not enough emotional content and it does not speak depth to the viewer (Sullivan & McCarthy, 2009).

John Steiner spoke of the texture of memories and Bakhtin spoke of self-identity through the art dialog. Also the voice of the object is discussed though meanings, values, symbols, and color choices. Viewers get different feelings from the art based in their own identity and framing. Dewey sees art as experience; Bakhtin sees life and art dialoguing with each other. The interaction is feelings, cognitions, and emotions that create the dialogue.

In a landmark study by Sigmund Koch, he affirmed that aesthetic endeavors are thought to be the center of human life and hence meriting close psychological attention. Koch was known in the 1950-1970s for his theories of the importance of aesthetics named “scientific positivistic thinking.” In the 1960s he envisioned an institute devoted to a research program in the arts at
Duke University. He did interviews with working artists and presented at the American Psychology Association in 1992. He interviewed and observed artists at work, their environments and art processes. In 1986 he was given a grant from the Ford Foundation at Boston University to conduct meaningful research on creative work and artist as collaborator. The term used for the interviews, in lieu of research conversation, was rather to “invite organic development of conversation,” as quoted by Koch in Franklin article (2001). Similarly in 2007, Sullivan and McCarthy completed an extensive qualitative review of 12 artists, shadowing their work, activity, notebooks, art events, process and product.

**Art and Brain Function**

Visual information is first processed in the occipital lobe in the primary visual cortex, the striate cortex. This information is combined with the visual association cortex; this visual information then takes two paths to the ventral stream and leading to the temporal lobe which integrates, shape, form and color. Part of this information is then forwarded to the orbitofrontal cortex, where emotion, cognition and action are driven. Emotional processing first happens at the amygdalea. Art therapy is an action oriented therapy which is processed in the primary motor cortex. There is an assessment tool called ETC- Expressive Therapies Continuum, (Hinz, 2009, as cited in Lusebrink, 2011), each part aligning with a different portion of the brain. It breaks down to; 1.) kinesthetic / sensory for exploration of materials and textures. 2.) perceptual/affective explores the figure /ground relationship and the 3.) cognitive /symbolic category looks at form, line, concept formation, and word inclusion. Lusebrink links the parts of the brain and the ETC levels, which indicates that art therapy accesses information that is not available by verbal processing. Each level in the ETC parallels brain structure.
The Medium of Collage

Collage is a combination of images and words. Collage has been used throughout history by many artists throughout the world; among the most popular are Pablo Picasso, Henri Matisse and Romare Bearden. The collage artist transforms image, reconstructs image and puts it together as a new image. Collage has similarities and parallels to Narrative therapy. Storytelling in narrative psychotherapy and collage are equally fundamental. Collage is a representational way to collect life stories and defining memories. The qualitative approach this article explored Collage Life Story Elicitation Technique (CLET), which is an extension of Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technique (Van Schalkwyk, 2010). According to Zaltman it focuses on concepts that lead to level of awareness such as perception, memory, learning, and reasoning. By combining collage with written expression, the participant is engaged in vivid perception and memory collection. These are some of the questions participants were asked after the first step of CLET which is the making of the collage. The first written refection question is: “Do these pictures represent significant experiences in my life so far?” Further reflecting upon the created collage image they can write their life story, tell stories about the collage and individual images within an image. They then can discuss where they currently see themselves on the collage and juxtapose meanings within the collage. This can be done by comparing images within the image and asking themselves about similarities and differences. Then lastly, they may reflect upon the process. CLET shows symbolic meanings and representations. It is storytelling in a non-linguistic manner. Collage making prompts autobiographical memory.

Bahktin and McAdams further agree that a life story collage stimulates reflection and encourages memory. It facilitates integration of conflicting relationships to self and others (Bahktin, 2002, McAdams, 2001, as cited in Sullivan & McCarthy, 2009). In another study about
collage, Kato and Morta (2010), examine an unusual perspective. They were able to look at the quantifiable aspects of collage, in a traditionally qualitative medium, such as number of pieces cut and themes expressed. Within the Kato & Morta article it is stated that Buck and Provancer (1972) suggested that picture choice reflected self image, psychic energy, patient control and mental organization. Lerner and Ross (1970) also highlighted in the Kato & Morta piece, looked at the number of cuttings within a collage and the subject matter. They used the Tokyo University Egogram, a personality inventory. They had a small sample group of 10 university students. They actually digitally measured the percentage of expression area used using Adobe Photoshop to measure personality. They were able to use a quantifiable technique to measure collage art as an effort to learn about personality. Collage is effective in knowing the self. It can be used to explore many themes including spirituality, including spiritual stories, genograms, and lifemaps (Nichols & Hunt, 2010).

A Study of a Group of Female Fiber Artists

A study in Australia of a group of female fiber artists showed that by collaboration and interaction, negotiating social and cultural meaning through art. This group was a qualitative platform for “informing understandings of self” (Grushka, 2005, p. 353). “Artists are the inventors, creators, maintainers of culture in any society” (Grushka, 2005, p. 353). The article discussed phenomenological experiences showing a strong link with Adlerian thinking. Imagery in the group gives us a way to look at conditions of self, such as self-knowing, self-reflexivity, and self-consciousness. The artist bridges in her art processes and products, a connectedness of individual, to family, society and world (Grushka, 2005). This was a study of qualitative inquiry. The Australian sample was seven females ages 28 to 74. They are practicing artists in Australia in fiber and have other jobs and responsibilities as well. Qualitative data was collected by ways
of philosophical and artist statements, exhibition catalogues, critical writings on group process and images. “They explored personal and collective aesthetic boundaries” Grushka pp 353-366 (2005) For their exhibition statement they only would put pen to paper when it was a collective statement informed by personal contribution to the group. The conclusion of the article was paralleling Jung’s thoughts on the self verses the collective unconscious, and Alfred Adler’s relational life tasks and social interest. The study alluded to the limited shelf life, a metaphor for individual existence verses the universal collective. They derived new meaning about their individual art works and lives based on the collective thought of the group.

A Look at Color and Symbol (the Tarot)

Within the framework of the Tarot card deck, each numbered card represents an evolution of consciousness, as a function of the collective human experience. Each card stands for a moral lesson that a human must learn to have a balanced life experience. We must leave behind our mistaken beliefs in order to have spiritual growth. Inna Semetsky wrote a couple of articles describing a great analogy of the cinematic screen representing tarot as a three dimensional view of a two dimensional reality. This is presented as the spread of the cards which serves as a projection of the subconscious of the individual. The cards represent past, present, and future as one layered view. It could be paralleled with the Rorschach ink blot method, which is a psychology assessment. This test evaluates interpersonal and intrapsychic transactions. The tarot spread is considered projective geometry and a snapshot of a dynamic view. “Tarot displays the triadic quality of representation, relationality, mediation and a portraiture of thought” said Charles Sanders Pierce in the Semetsky article (2009, p. 340). “Truth didn’t come into the world naked but in archetypes and images. Truth is received only that way. There is rebirth and its image, they must be reborn though image” (Semetsky, 2009, p. 341). The
tarot is a symbolic system that symbolizes collective human experiences. It serves to put meaning to universal human concepts and is grounded in the ancient maxim of “Know thyself” (Semetsky, 2010).

Carl Jung called the therapeutic function of the tarot the process of individuation, which is to integrate the conscious with the unconscious for the purpose of healing the psyche and achieving a greater personality (Jung, 1972, p. 136). Carl Rogers believed it to be congruence, unconditional positive regard and empathy (Semetsky, 2010). Jung employed active imagination and dream analysis, and Smetsky points to that tarot symbolism as the universal language of signs and symbols, which has a profound relationship to the soul of the world. An expert reader translates the pictorial language of symbols and signs and creates a personal narrative for the person who is getting the reading done about their own life story. The images are called arcana. The reading gives a person intuitive guidance to solving their lives problems and questions. In Jungian terms the cards show amplification, which show unconscious archetypes. Jung also alluded to the transcendent within the Tarot, which creates a symbolic bridge between the spirit world and the physical world. The tarot reader’s job is to create an imaginative narrative or story which empowers the subject of the reading to self reflect and access their unconscious. The complex positioning of the cards gives insight into a presenting problem, influences such as the person’s feeling, traits and behaviorism. Lastly, unconscious factors that contribute to present situation helps gain self-awareness through the cards. These unconscious revelations are deeply embedded in the person’s unconscious, subconscious and often their dreams and imagination. Jung said the archetypes represented in the tarot spread determine the nature of configurationally process and the course it will follow with seeming foreknowledge, or as if it were already in a possession of the goal (Jung, 1970, p. 411). Jung said “through progressive integration of
unconscious, we have a chance to make experiences of an archetypal nature provide feelings of continuity before and after our existence” (Jung, 1977, p. 1572). When we understand the archetype we participate in its eternity and timelessness. We can see spiritual reality and guidance through timeless symbolic images of the tarot deck. Symbols transform a situation to an understandable explanation of a concern or problem; this can be a step towards healing and opening up to the spirit and to the soul.

**Art, Healing and Public Health**

There is evidence that interacting with art as the observer or the creator of the art can enhance moods and emotional well being. In the past decade psychologists have looked at how the arts can help heal emotional trauma and help gain self understanding and self reflection and to ultimately alter behaviors and patterns of thinking. This idea that creativity is a powerful aspect in the healing process has been embraced by many cultures throughout time, expressed through cultural ritual of storytelling, music, dance, hand crafts, clothing, body ornament, etc.. The field of Art Therapy has been named and in existence since the 1940s.

Art helps people give expression to emotions they sometimes cannot put to words. Art can also be a refuge from pain or fear about mental or physical illness. The Stuckney and Nobel article about the link between art, healing and public health, highlights an interesting study where creative art intervention was the independent variable; stress, anxiety, and emotion were the dependent variables. It was a six month study at a cancer research center. The interventions were designed for bedside delivery. The patients completed the Mini-Profile of Mood States, the Beck Anxiety Inventory and the Derogatic Affects Balance Scale. It was given to both patients and care providers and indicated decreased stress levels and increased communications between the patient and their caregivers.
**Color and Emotional Content**

This is a large subject and can be studied further however a few basic relationships were discovered with a study of college students. It was noted primary hues had the highest number of positive responses. Green evoked relaxation and comfort because of its relationship to nature. Red was associated with excitement. Orange was seen as distressing, purple as dignified and yellow, cheerful. Blue was linked to comfort and security. Bright colors were associated with happy emotions, and dark colors with negative emotions. Colors can also be described in temperature terms such as warm and cool. Surprisingly there was a negative association with the color white. The reasons given were that it was associated with feelings of emptiness, and loneliness. Black was associated with sadness, depression, fear and anger (Kaya, Naz et al., 2004). There were also symbolic inferences based on popular culture and advertising. Color has played an important role in emotion and connects the art and spirit realms.

**Collage/Art Research Summarized**

Art can share the way one looks at self, community and the world. The maker and the viewer experience art based on individual life style. Art Therapy and the brain functions illustrate that Art Therapy can help access the non-verbal expression. Collage as a medium is a rich form of storytelling, layer upon layer, images upon image, with a shifting context depending on the viewer or maker’s world and self view. The research indicated that collage is a valid means to self-discovery and a key to learning more about yourself through visual storytelling. The tarot puts meaning to universal and self-concepts as well by means of healing archetypal images. Archetypal means in Jungian psychology, an inherited pattern of thought or symbolic imagery derived from the past collective experience and present in the individual unconscious mind. The cards are tools to gain self perception and soul connection, by way of the images
opening a person up to bridging the spiritual and physical worlds. Creativity and color were
found to elicit emotion and self-awareness as well. The study of women fiber artists in Australia
showed a connectedness of individual, to family, society and the world (Grushka, 2005). This
was a study of qualitative inquiry. The conclusion of the Grushka article and artist community
study parallels Jung’s thoughts on the self verses the collective unconscious, and Alfred Adler’s
relational life tasks and social interest. These women derived new meaning about their
individual art works and lives based on the collective thought of the group.

**Spiritual Healing Modalities**

**Color Therapy**

Color has had a role in many healing modalities as in art, Feng Shui, Ayurveda, and the
chakra system. Color therapy is also known as chromatherapy. It is a form of alternative
medicine that helps balance the body in physical, emotional, and spiritual realms through
balancing the chakra energy.

**Building Blocks – Eastern and Western View - How Chakras Parallel the Endocrine System**

Georg Feuerstein defines chakras as psycho energetic vortices forming the major organs
of the body composed of life energy or prana (Feuerstein 1997, 1968). They are also described as
the centers of consciousness; they are swirling moving energetic centers starting at the base of
the spine and rising to the crown of the head. This is a traditionally Eastern definition which
corresponds directly with the Western medical description of the endocrine system. The seventh
or crown chakra (Sahasrara) is associated with the pituitary gland, which secretes hormones to
the whole of the endocrine system, and also connects the central nervous system via the
hypothalamus. The sixth chakra, or third eye chakra is linked to the pineal gland (Ajna chakra).
The fifth is the throat chakra (Vishuddha), paralleled with the thyroid, affecting growth the
maturation. The fourth chakra is the heart (Anahata), related to the thymus. This is part of the immune system and produces T-cells to fight off disease and stress. The third chakra or solar plexus (Manipura) affects energy, digestion, corresponding with the pancreas and outer adrenal glands. The second or sacral chakra (Swaddhishanna) affects emotion, sexuality, and creativity; it is linked to the sex organs. Lastly the first or base chakra (Muludhara) is related to survival and basic security needs. Kundalini energy is coiled here (Sat Bir Khalsa, 2000, as cited in Barrett, 2010). This also relates to inner adrenals and the fight or flight reaction. In Eastern medicine the chakras are known to be levels of consciousness (Chrystal, 2006). Each spiritual center has an emotion linked to it, a color, a nature element, and an animal. There is a natural link to art and creative visualization in meditation depicting the chakras through visual means, as well as a strong connection to Jung’s dream symbolism.

**Traits and symbols of chakras.** The chakras are listed top down starting at the crown of the head and working in a downward direction on the body:

- **7th** - top of head, crown, violet, spiritual connection and bliss, God connection
- **6th** - third eye, forehead, indigo, light and imagination, dreams, owl
- **5th** - throat, blue, ether, communication and truth, deer
- **4th** - heart, green, air, love, balance, antelope
- **3rd** - solar plexus, yellow, fire, power, ram, sun energy
- **2nd** - lower abdomen, orange, water, sexuality, creativity, crocodile
- **1st** - perineum, red, earth, trust and survival, elephant (citation)

Other chakra implications are the existence of an important dormant energy residing at the base of the spine called Kundalini in Sanskrit. To ignore the physical aspects or body aspects
of the chakras would be equally as unbalanced as paying attention to the spiritual or metaphysical aspects of the chakras (Maxwell, 2009).

**Yoga**

The practice of yoga for the sake of health, to keep fit, or to maintain flexibility is the external practice of yoga. While this is a great place to begin, it is not the end. In a simple asana or pose, one is experiencing “three levels of quest: the external quest, which brings firmness of the body; the internal quest, which brings steadiness of intelligence; and the innermost quest, which brings benevolence of spirit” proclaimed B.K.S. Iyenger in 2005 (Evans & Abrams, 2005).

“*Your mind is your servant, your body is your vehicle and your soul is your residence.*"

*Yogi Bhajan (1988)*

In the United States alone approximately sixteen million people practice yoga, yet according to Georg Feuerstein there may be “tens of millions primarily interested in health and fitness who know little about the traditional goals of self-transcendence, self-transformation and self-realization” (2003, pp. 62-71). In yoga classes in the United States, there is an overemphasis of the asana or physical poses and an underestimate of pranayama or breath, meditation, and chanting of traditional Eastern yogic practice (Delaney & Anthis, 2010). An area of research that interests Delaney and Anthis is at the intersection of yoga’s physical and psychological benefits. How does one’s yoga practice affect body image and awareness? They studied across approximately twenty styles of yoga practiced in the United States.

They are classified into three types:

1. High mind/body connection,
2. Medium mind/body connection
3. Low mind/body connection.

The mind aspect is the meditation, breathing, mindfulness and chanting. The body areas are poses for fitness and endurance. Delany and Anthis hypothesize that high mind/body classes would show a greater improvement in body awareness and acceptance. Their sample studied ninety-two women from five locations they used the Latha Yoga Attitude Scale (LYAS), developed in India to show internalization of yogic principles (Delaney and Anthis, 2010). The questioning for the LYAS was centered around mind aspects e.g. “yoga practice increases calmness and control over self.”

They also reported with the, Body Awareness Questionnaire (BAQ), a sample direction of a BAQ question is directly linked to body awareness such as “I am always aware of changes in my energy level when I eat certain foods”, and also a body satisfaction scale. The findings did show a greater body awareness with the high mind/body yoga classes and traditions that not only emphasized the physical and fitness aspects of yoga, but the equal importance to the mind aspects including meditation and breathing. The study did not show how much greater the body awareness was with the high mind body classes. Their findings were based on a survey given to yoga class participants asking multiple choice questions. There was not a quantifiable measure produced, but a consensus only among participants across several yoga types.

Dr. Sat Bir Khalsa echoes that sentiment in his studies. He has recognized the need for peer reviewed studies in a field that is understudied. He has several published works and is known as a champion of yoga research (Barret, 2010). There is a bias against yoga by scientists. Yoga is “trivialized for cosmetic purposes or to slim your butt or is perceived as goofy, new age, or a kind of out there practice” Khalsa says (Barrett, 2010, p. 120). Currently, he is studying teens, and is trying to prove that teaching yoga to young people will have a positive ripple effect.
on our society. He did twelve weeks of yoga with high school students in Massachusetts, and compares them to a group doing a traditional physical education fitness class. The students were taught breath techniques with the movements. At the end of the study they filled out a questionnaire and reported less anger, less fatigue and more resilience than the fitness control group. The teens were grateful for new stress reducing coping strategies. These findings were based on student feedback via a survey. Khalsa has an advanced degree (Sat Bir Singh Khalsa, PhD., doctorate in human physiology and neuroscience from the University of Toronto) in neuroscience. In 1985 he received a grant from the National Center for Complementary and Alternative medicine to study yoga and insomnia. Since then he has been published numerous times on the benefits of yoga affecting conditions from depression, anxiety, and addiction. He feels there is a newfound interest by scientists in the field of yoga and that more proposals for studies will be written and accepted in the near future (Barrett, 2010).

**Holistic Wellness**

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines Holistic Health as viewing a being in totality within a wide ecological spectrum and emphasizing the view of ill health or disease is brought about by an imbalance or disequilibrium (Stuckey & Nobel, 2010). Research is beginning to show that mental, emotional, social, and spiritual factors all combine to affect personal health. Spirituality can be defined as an individual’s values and principles which give meaning and purpose to life with or without religious spirituality. There is the spiritual view of the higher power, being God or Goddess or being the higher power within me. The concept of transcendence says that belief in a supreme or higher power does not require that one be of a particular religious faith. These concepts are traced back to core Jungian concepts of spiritual exploration and the search for meaning and purpose. Spiritual questions to ask individuals on a
spiritual quest are “What brings meaning to your life? Where do you turn in times of stress? What brings you peace, serenity and joy? How do you view spirituality? (Nichols & Hunt, 2011)

**Meditation**

The word meditation is used to describe practices that self-regulate the body and mind, used to induce relaxation and trance like states (Cahn & Polich, 2006). Concentrative meditation techniques can focus on a repeated sound, an imagined image, a body or breath sensation or pattern. Mantra is thought to occupy awareness during meditation. Mantra is defined as mystic words in the Hindu and or Buddhist tradition that are believed to be the sound form of reality, having the power to bring into being the reality its represents. An outcome of meditation as an internal experience is the expansiveness in the experience of self (Cahn & Polich, 2006).

**Mindfulness/loving-kindness meditation.** Meditation and mindfulness practice have been studied and have reported evidence that this practice helps individuals self-regulate stress, anxiety, chronic, pain, emotional pain, and illness (Kabat-Zinn, 2005). Fredrickson, Coffey, Pek, Cohn et al., (2008) extensively studied the Loving-Kindness Meditation (LKM) in a corporate setting. This meditation with daily practice increase positive emotions, which leads to increased mindfulness or attention to the present moment, life purpose, social support, and decreased illness. The researchers looked at a key hypothesis which is called the Broaden and Build theory. Citation here. The theory holds that positive emotions broaden people’s attention and thinking, widen visual attention, and increase openness to new experiences. The build part of the hypothesis holds that positive emotions set people on personal growth pathways, increase optimism, and tranquility. There was a seven week intervention conducted in a workplace wellness setting, the final sample included sixty seven employees. Most participants were female, advanced degree holders. Participants received a small monetary compensation for full
participation and spending time beyond their work day in participation of this study there were multiple measures, including: Mindfulness and Awareness Scale, Trait Hope Scale, Savoring Beliefs Inventory, Life Orientation Test, Ego Resilience Test, Psychological Well Being Test, Dyadic Adjustment Scale and more. It appears to have been a very complex and thorough study. They averaged measurements from a combination of studies and looked at nine positive emotions including: joy, gratitude, hope, interest, love and pride each day. Each day emotions were recorded and averaged.

The conclusion of the study confirmed the Broaden and Build theory (Fredrickson, Coffey, Pek, Cohn et al., 2008), that the LKM, led to shifts in daily experiences of a range of positive emotions, and also links positive emotions to life satisfaction. One surprising finding in the study was at first there was a lower level of positive emotions in the meditation group sample. This first day’s result was attributed to starting a new practice and the fear of the unknown. Kabat Zinn reiterated this in his 2005 article, in which he states the obstacles to novice meditators would be cravings, anger, boredom, restlessness, and doubt.

**Meditation and brain function.** According to Cahn and Polich (2006) meditation and the brain wave implications were studied. They found that meditation appears to affect electroencephalogram (EEG) frequency distribution, showing a slowing in the alpha band. Their studies also show that theta power increases in meditative practice. They concluded that there is an increase in theta and alpha power bands and decreased frequency in the alpha band with slowing for gamma. They also looked at brain imaging or Positron Emission Tomography (PET) scans with meditation when there was an intense yoga practice two hours before administering PET scans. There was an overall increase in bilateral hippocampus, parietal, occipital sensory and association regions, with decreases in orbitofrontal, dorsolateral, prefrontal, anterior
cingulare cortices, temporal and inferior parietal lobes, thalamus and cerebellum (Cahn & Polich, 2006). They found discrepancies in results most likely because of lack of standardized designs for assessing meditative effects. There was consistency of finding of increased theta and alpha bands. A major challenge they found in this area of research is to differentiate between meditative and deep sleep stages when studying brain activity. There is more work to do as Eastern medicine becomes more integrated with Western medicine for more comprehensive studies about how meditation affects the brain.

**Spiritual Modalities Research Summarized**

There is a bridge of Eastern and Western medicine by studying parallels between the chakra and endocrine systems and how balance and equilibrium can be achieved. Colors have been used in spiritual practice and have deep meaning and energetic properties. Yoga which is not solely a Western fitness based practice is more effective in enhancing self concept and self esteem including body image. Women need balance because of societal and familial expectations and gender roles. Placing emphasis on doing it all and external body objectification may be the results of this cultures super woman syndrome or women being expected to do it all. More attention to research in this area is very likely. Interest and awareness are increasing for benefits of mind, body, and soul modalities. The Loving Kindness study was extensive in its many means of measurability and the Broaden and Build theory was confirmed. The theory holds that positive emotions broaden ones attention and thinking. Meditation affects brain chemistry in a positive calming matter; however challenges in research have been troublesome because discerning the benefits of meditation and the difference between that of deep sleep states has been a challenge. In concluding, more studies are needed with an upward trend of increasing yogic practices being
used in the United States for decreasing stress and increasing relaxation and holistic well-being. There needs to be more synergy between Eastern and Western yogic practices.

**Blended Modalities Art + Yoga**

A fascinating article about an art and yoga project in California called the Art of Yoga Project (AYP), designed as a gender specific intervention that combines yoga, visual arts and creative writing for young girls in the juvenile justice system. It was founded by a nurse practitioner who treated these adolescent girls with many high risk behaviors and diagnosis including: anxiety depression, eating disorders, chemical abuse, self harm, and unsafe sex practices. Many of the young women lacked “a fundamental awareness of and connection to their own physical and emotional needs” (Harris & Fitton, 2010, p. 111). In 2003 they ran a pilot group. Most girls, compared to boys who find themselves in the juvenile justice system have experienced physical, sexual, and psychological abuse (Harris & Fitton, 2010). The Yoga and Creative Arts Curriculum (YCAC) is designed to teach the girls self awareness, self respect, and self control. It uses the Patanjalis eight limbs of yoga and teaches non-violence, integrates truth, self-discipline, and contentment. The merging of the art and yoga was chosen to be a safe space where authentic sharing happens. These workshops are co-taught by certified yoga instructors, writers and arts instructors.

They also employ a mentoring component with a circle of supportive adults and elders. Cultural and sexual identity diversity is also respected within the curriculum. It was concluded that this type of program uses strength based programming, helping build physical and emotional strength. It is also important to include sensitivity and training to trauma issues. Both of these practices, art and yoga, can release trauma and it should be done in a safe and methodical manner. The program is also evidence based. The program sites are being evaluated in terms of
key outcomes. The three measures are: self-awareness, self-respect and self-control. The girls earn self-regulation by using breathing and mindfulness to inform better decision making and choices. The goal of the program is to fully integrate art, yoga, and creative writing, as a means of self-expression, into the juvenile justice systems for girls.

**Soul Themes in Women**

**Gender Differences in Self Awareness**

Research indicates a strong correlation between shame and self-consciousness as a measure of self reflection. As discussed by Tangeny (Arndt & Goldenberg, 2004), this article explores that women are more shame based than men in general, especially as it relates to body image. There was a study highlighted by Frederickson & Roberts that compared women and men trying on bathing suits while looking in a mirror. Increased shame was shown in women but not in men. The study pointed to looking at self objectification and self consciousness. Increased shame in women may be due to the fact that women are more self aware and reflective. An interesting link was made that perhaps also societal body objectification in women is a factor. As a result, shame is part of a woman’s “self related cognitive network” (Arndt & Goldenberg, 2004, p. 34). There have been many studies on the affects of the trend of self affirmation. In the Cohen, Garcia, Apfel & Master article (2006), African American middle school students who wrote essays about their key values at the beginning of the semester, had improved and higher grades at the end of the term. They showed many key studies that show self-affirmation can reduce stress. This article particularly looked at the aspects of self-awareness within the self-affirmation process.
Self – Affirmation Theory

This term repeated itself across articles where there are two types of affirmation, 1.) value affirmation and 2.) attribute affirmation. Value affirmation increases self-clarity and understanding of self, but not self-esteem. Attribute affirmation affirms positive qualities of self and does increase self esteem, but not necessarily self clarity or the broader term of self-awareness. Taylor and Lobel state that self affirmation activated self improvement (Stapel & Van Der Linde, 2011). Value affirmation is spiritual beliefs, religious beliefs, ethical and moral opinions. Attribute affirmation is I statements such as “I am smart, I am beautiful” etc. (Campbell 1996). The self has a self-defining knowledge piece with the I statement “Who am I?” This refers to self-clarity or “How do I feel about me?” Beliefs about self can be 1. focused on self-worth, 2. focused on self-clarity or understanding the self which parallels to self-awareness. Value affirmation dictates what someone stands for. Attribute information, or the positive I statements indicate improved self-esteem (Stapel & Vande Linde 2010).

The authors feel this distinction is necessary to deepen our knowledge and understanding of the psychology of self-affirmation because it can be used to inform affirmation inspired interventions in the future. The Self- Affirmation Theory explains that people are motivated to have a perceived worth and integrity of the self (Sherman, Nelson, Bunyan, Cohen, Nussbaum, & Garcia (2009). A key conclusion is that subtle; as opposed to blatant affirmations are most effective and that self-affirmation works better when the party is unaware that the affirmation has a self esteem bolstering effect. Overtly striving for happiness and boosting self-esteem can have the opposite effect and defeat the purpose. Also discussed was the self-determination theory which is identifying reasons people strive to improve self-esteem. These self-affirmation practices were shown to reduce stresses and defensive responses to threats (Sherman, Nelson,
Bunyan, Cohen, Nussbaum, & Garcia, 2009). “The overall impact of this study was that the effectiveness of self affirmation may lie in the subtlety of its delivery. These theories about self-affirmation and self interest are likely to be most effective when participants are affirmed yet unaware” (Sherman, Nelson et al., 2009, p. 746).

The Impett, Schooler et al. article looks at gender difference in relational authenticity. Boys are raised to hide emotions. Girls are taught to silence their opinions. Focus groups were conducted asking girls questions about relationships. Authentic or truth within relationships and mutually satisfying relationships and friendships correlated with improved self-esteem, decreased depression, increased sexual health etc. Early adolescence is key and found to be the time when girls sometimes sacrifice relationship authenticity to fit in and be popular. The findings of the Impett, Schooler et al. study from 2009 point to a decline in self esteem in early adolescence and then a recovery and boost over the course of adolescence.

Another key finding is that there is a link between self-clarity, self-awareness, and self-esteem. Campbell (1990) demonstrated that low self esteem correlated with low self clarity. It is hypothesized that people with high self esteem have a clear picture and awareness of themselves. Campbell (1996) states that the essential “Who am I?” question is a knowledge question and also has an evaluative piece which is “How do I feel about myself?” That there are clearly many paths to self-affirmation in women and girls was the overarching conclusion of the articles reviewed.

**Self-Esteem in Girls**

Self-esteem is defined as the totality of an individual’s thoughts and emotions. It is associated with positive youth development, and important to holistic health, both mental and physical. Body image is central to this in girls in particular. Girls are socialized to believe that
external appearance is a basis for self-evaluation. This article examines why girls are more prone to low self esteem than boys. Expectations of women and girls are that they be nice, kind, polite, good wives, mothers who care for the needs of others (Impett, Schooler et al., 2008). A new term emerged from this article called “Relationship Authenticity.” It is based on feminist research that shows the importance of relational processes on development, a strong parallel with key Adlerian concepts, such as the life tasks and social interest.

**Soul Themes Summarized**

> "Your mind is your servant, your body is your vehicle and your soul is your residence."

*Yogi Bhajan (1988)*

There are strong gender based differences with regards to self. Women experience self-criticism, especially in regards to physical appearance. This seems due to cultural, familial, and societal messages. The self-affirmation theory, makes an important distinction between value and attribute affirmation. Value is belief based and attribute is self, “I am” based. Relationship authenticity is also key in young women in having a strong basis for positive self-concept. Authentic and truthful relationships with family, peers, love relationships, work, and community, have a marked impact on self-esteem and self-concept in a positive way. This is a direct correlation with the Adlerian life tasks. This researched would add that the impact of spirituality would also be a factor in positive outcomes and opinions of self in young women.

> "You yourself as much as anybody in the entire universe, deserve your love and affection"

– Siddhartha Gautama (Buddha) (Impett, Schooler et al., 2008)
**Discussion & Final Summary**

**A Discussion with Marlene DeLott- Revelations: The Richness and Wisdom of the Tarot**

**Revelations in Tarot**

This researcher conducted an interview with a long term friend and spiritual guide, Marlene DeLott. Marlene was “accidently” exposed to the tarot on a trip back to Chicago with a cousin when she was twenty-nine years old. This was the time of free love and drugs. Marlene grew up in poverty on the streets of Chicago in the Cabrini Green projects. She described meeting a large man with a red beard on this trip, who told her you will be doing this work when you go home. She began studying and reading about mysticism. One of the first books she read was Jung’s Memories, Reflections, and Dreams. When she returned to Minneapolis, she worked as a community organizer, in crime prevention, and in the public school system, and as a detached outreach worker, finding empathy and commonality with people like those she grew up in Cabrini Green (M. DeLott, personal communication, February 18, 2012).

She took classes in the Tarot and Kabbalah. She was getting burnt out on the street outreach work and started tarot readings at the Renaissance festival and opened a spiritual book store in Minneapolis. "Over the years I have found it very difficult to describe my readings. For one thing they vary for each person, and of course, they have changed over the 45 years, as part of the community of clients have changed. I have always been able to say, unequivocally that I am not a fortune teller” (M. DeLott, personal communication, February 18, 2012). In describing who she is, she spoke about the belief that conscious people shape their own destinies. The tarot readings attempt to look at the patterns of one’s life and to examine and get insight into and perhaps change those patterns when necessary. The tarot leads by suggestion, those blocks that present us from making necessary and healthy pattern changes.
She spoke of the tarot, something this researcher has participated with her as a client for twenty seven years, but never attempted to fully understand. The client draws with the left hand, drawing from the unconscious, right brain. The reader uses the right hand, and or logical left brain. “Pictures existed before written language” she said. The cards depict universal archetypes or timeless symbols such as; the sun, the moon, the elements (air, fire, earth, and water.) The deck is based on 22 images or “life Lessons”. , it’s origin, she said in the Egyptian Sphinx. There are a wide range of beautifully illustrated unique tarot decks, from traditional to very contemporary, there is even a “French Disney deck” . Each card has the potential to heal, if one hears and allows the subconscious messages in. The cards resonate viscerally with ones soul, characterized as action via instinct verses intellect. The tarot is incredibly dense and layered with meaning and symbolism. Marlene described in simplistic terms the 4 suits of the tarot the suits can be viewed as the four directions, the 4 emotions, feeling, thinking sensation, and intuition (M. DeLott, personal communication, February 18, 2012).

Wands-spirit sex, masculine spirit, fire
Swords – Mind, analysis, rational, masculine
Pentacles –Body, food, sleep, earth, feminine, body
Cups-emotions, cups are the, water, emotion

**Revelations in Art and Yoga**

With art making, when one is creating, at a subconscious level and process, one feels their own soul revealed in the art. When you meditate you learn to know your own soul , this also parallels with art making, when one is creating, at a subconscious level and process, one feels their own soul revealed in the art. Yoga is practiced in community and heeds the universal collective consciousness, so in yoga we are both in soul and spirit
Revelations in Soul

Soul is how we connect to the earth, “like African drum beats, soul music, and soul food.” Being awakened, we described, when we visit a place that resonates with every cell in our body. This researcher experienced Cuba on this visceral level. When asked about soul themes she described the act of a bunch of women finding camaraderie and friendship, bellyaching about men. She, in common with this researcher, remember stories of Jewish grandmother and aunties speaking in Yiddish so the children could not understand the “bellyaching”. She talked about her community organizing work as “soul work “Livening in the moment, being of service, akin to Adlerian Social Interest, and for me, being in practice of Art Therapy. Soul is about trusting self, trusting the moment, being what they should needs you to be, what you are meant to do in your time on this planet. We talked a lot about soul, soul relationship in art and yoga is giving up the moment to be of service to you. Jung spoke of in service to the self, in service to the ego. The ego delays being in the present moment. The ego has an agenda, when one let’s go of ego and is present with true self and soul that is being mindful and present in this moment (M. DeLott, personal communication, February 18, 2012).

Conversation Soul verses Spirit

We discussed that soul, in art and life, touches the heart, it is energetically based. Spirit is an abstraction, a non-soul, that of intellect.

She describes soul as: food, earth, the planet, in conversation with the spirit: the sky, the abstract, the divinity.” Future is what you are doing in your life in this very moment, we cannot predict the future. She described a directive to know ones soul. "Sit naked in front of a mirror in the dark, with a candle, one ne side of your face, stare at your face, look into the reflection of
your third eye, see yourself changing form” (M. DeLott, personal communication, February 18, 2012).

A Discussion with Ta-Coumba Aiken- Spirit Painter and Friend –Revelations:

“Inher” Peace

Revelations in Art- Artist Biography

This researcher conducted an interview with a lifelong friend, and internationally renowned painter, Ta-Coumba Aiken. "I've always created art, my first mural was in 1969. I've been drawing since I was three years old. My first solo show at six was to prove to my dad that I was good at doing art” (T. Aiken, personal communication, December 29, 2011). Inspired by his mother at a young age, his first canvases already showed an eye-catching style and an advanced command of lines. Then, when an accident at age 11 impaired his perception of colors, the young artist turned to paint pens and ink, opting to paint directly from the bottles when having problems seeing colors. Today, the variety of tone and contrasting colors. Over the past forty-five years, he has created more than 175 murals and over 300 children/community murals and public art sculptures. The themes range from histories of communities and towns to my unique style of rhythm patterns and spirit writing.

Aiken’s work is the recipient of many prestigious award like the Minnesota State Arts Boards Headland Center for the Arts four month artist in residency program in California, the Bush Visual Arts Fellowship, the Pollack-Krasner Fellowship, the Gottlieb Fellowship, and the Saint Paul Companies Leader Initiative in Neighborhoods (LIN) Fellowship; to name a few. Original paintings can be found in many collections such as corporate collections of The Walker Arts Center, Minnesota Museum of Modern Art, Dain Raucher Corporation, Piper Jaffrey, Honeywell, General Mills, and the personal collections of Herbier Hancock, Taj Mahal, Earth
Wind and Fire, James Earl Jones, Dr. Maya Angelou, and many, many others (December Designs, n.d.).

**Vision Award: Ta-Coumba T. Aiken – Ordway Sally Award 2012**

Aiken is the force behind some of Minnesota’s most acclaimed public artworks. Since the early 1970s, he has created public art in collaboration with schools, neighborhood organizations, and city planning and development departments on works such as the Jax/Gillette Children’s Hospital mural, the Minneapolis Central Library’s tile fireplace and the North Side’s Pilot City murals project. He supports the use of his artwork by organizations involved in pursuing social justice.

Inspired by his mother at a young age, his first canvases already showed an eye-catching style and an advanced command of lines. Working from black and white outlines, he describes his process of coloration and shape-building as “spirit writing” and his usage of repeating imagery as “rhythm patterns.” His artistic philosophy is driven by his desire to “create art to heal the hearts and souls of people and their communities by evoking a positive spirit.” This researcher had the honor of a personal collaboration with this artist for his solo show at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, 2007/08 called Call & Response. The piece was a textile piece, mixed media employing techniques, of appliqué, digital printing, and hand painting triptych.

**Revelations in Collage**

Aiken commented “we as human beings are collages” Life is a collage, nothing is a whole picture, collage is more than one story, many stories, an entity, collage is an analogy for a motion picture, it stops and picks up imagery along the way as it sees it in life. We also spoke of other healing mediums, he described: singing, dancing, paintings, drawing with a stick in the dirt, looking at clouds’, drawing simply with a black crayon, anything that evokes artistic
imagination. Art make you more self aware, because of the intuitive nature of how the work is done. “I allow learning from the images; I create the images, the beings in my images to expand my visual voice” (T. Aiken, personal communication, December 29, 2011)

Revelations in Yoga

Discussing yoga and the chakra system, this artist, who is not a yogi, but described his art is as meditation, He spoke a lot about breath and remembering to breathe and that fear causes breathlessness. In his art he describes his balance as visual voice versus visual imagery. Mediation for the artist is staring out the window when creating, and remembering to breathe.

Revelations in Soul

A “Soul” theme is James Brown, Michael Jackson, soul music,” (T. Aiken, personal communication, December 29, 2011) expressing the depth of life, the stories of life, revealing the inner workings of these stories, soul to soul connections. When asked what soul themes in women evoked for this artist, his response was that women are the essence of imagery, he was born or a women, trained and taught by women. We spoke about social interest and he spoke of doing the best for oneself so that you can do for your community. “Don’t expect anything in return” (T. Aiken, personal communication, December 29, 2011). Art making of the soul, allows the creator to express themselves freely, by mentorship and positive instruction, one can help young women dialog with themselves and with others in community through artistic revelation and sharing. “I am my community and my community is me, I will serve my community and my community however is the world, seriously” (T. Aiken, personal communication, December 29, 2011).
Conversation Soul verses Spirit

Aiken described spirit in art as breath, depth and acceptable, we talked of healing images. He described not all images heal; the healing only occurs to those who ask for and receive the gift of healing through art that contains spirit and soul.

A Discussion with Hari Kirin Kauri Khalsa author of Art & Yoga- Kundalini Awakening in Everyday Life.

Revelations in Art

This researcher conducted a first interview at an Art & Yoga teacher training week long workshop at Kripalu Institute in Massachusetts. Hari Kirin Kaur Khalsa has a Masters of Art in Creative Art Therapies and an MAFA in Public Art. These are some of the revelations from that conversation. She believes art making makes you more self aware due to basic skills such as looking, thinking and reflecting upon the art as a view into your soul. Art viewing makes one self aware by creating space to stop, look and experience. Spirit in art is soaring and universal. Images heal because parts of the self we are unaware of, our subconscious speaks, and our intuitions speak through these works of art. The art object becomes a third presence connecting two souls or collectively connecting, our universal soul through art. Collage puts image and word into new context as a means of storytelling. It can be viewed via the collective consciousness, archetypal and symbolical images can be interpreted by our psyches. Collage is juxtaposition and intersection. The art object defines new relationships; maker to viewer, teacher to student, and therapist to client (K. K. Khalsa, personal communication, November 14, 2011).

Revelations in Yoga

Hari Kirin took her first yoga class when she was fifteen years old. In her twenties, while studying art, she went to a women’s camp in New Mexico and met the master of Kundalini yoga,
Yogi Bhajan, who brought Kundalini yoga to the West from India in 1969. In 1985 another mentor in the Kundalini community, Gurucharan Singh Khalsa, encouraged her to teach workshops that merged art and Kundalini yoga (K. K. Khalsa, 2011). She began her merging of the practice as a young mother. She cared for children, as she housed her meditation and art in the same physical space of the home. When asked about the blend of work with yoga and spirituality between herself and her husband. Her husband is prolific author, theologian, and psychologist, Thomas Moore of Care of the Soul fame (K. K. Khalsa, 2011, pp. i-iii). She said they supervise each other’s work, dreams, spiritual and creative lives. Both of them experienced James Hillman as a mentor in archetypal psychology. Even though her husband is not a practicing yogi, he knows the art of meditation and contemplation. He was a monk for 18 years prior to their relationship. She says he is a naturally centered and contemplative person. She sees it in his work, his writing and even his piano playing. When asked how mantra healed, she spoke of vibrations and that points in the mouth were stimulated, as with asana or postures stimulating the meridians in the body. Hari Kirin is an accomplished yogi and teacher who studied with her master, Yogi Bhajan. She is an internationally renowned artist who has had gallery shows across the world. Yet she describes the most powerful part of her week, as when she meets weekly with an incarcerated girls group for yoga, art, and yogi tea. This is her Seva, when she is in service to other, and it has inspired this researcher’s hopes and dreams (K. K. Khalsa, personal communication, November 14, 2011).

Revelations in Soul

When asked to define soul themes in women, she spoke of that joy is not contingent on outcomes, but of the present, the here and now. In this yogic tradition, the concept of Seva or service is directly linked to Adlerian social interest. As with Adler, who believed a person could
not be completely in mental and physical balance if there was not an aspect of self that included social interest. Within the practice of Kundalini, there is the same belief. She has done extensive work in her community and in the worlds of art and Kundalini yoga. Currently, her favorite days are those spent with young girls in a Juvenile detention center in her hometown in Connecticut, doing, art, yoga, and having yogi tea. Seva or community service, and social justice are essential to the holism of an individual. This researcher’s upbringing is Jewish, and this also directly links to a core Jewish value which is called Tikkun Olam or repairing the world and Tzedakah or charity. A favorite quote from my time with her is “remember the one you have been waiting for is you.” This is a profound statement on self love, compassion and acceptance. We must be one with our souls (K. K. Khalsa, personal communication, November 14, 2011).

**Conversation Soul versus Spirit**

Kirin spoke of soul verses spirit, and of the differences and links between the two. The soul benefits from failures, disaster and misdirection’s of self. “Spirit can muscle you up to the sky, soul cannot” she said. Soul is what connects the body and world to the spirit. Spirit can be too ambitious and cut off from the soul, but when linked it is a powerfully strong bond. Kirin described further, soul verses spirit, which emerged from her discussions with her husband, Thomas Moore. She describes “the soul is our individual connecting to spirit, art reconnects soul and spirit.” (Cite interview) In the foreword of the book, her husband, prolific writer and academic, writer of Care of the Soul, writes that he hopes this merge of art and yoga represents a shift he is hoping for, that allows that the current separateness of soul and spirit, becomes the uniting of the soul and spirit in the near future, this aligns with the change in time from the age of Pisces to the age of Aquarius. The joining of images and yoga practice, and the intuitive and rational minds merging is a powerful combination. He speaks of the dismissing we as a society
have allowed to happen for intuitive artists, in an age devoted to research. “When soul and spirit comes together,” Moore says “there is great healing” (K. K. Khalsa, 2011, p. iii of foreword). Art and yoga together can bridge soul or self and spirit, community, world and universe. My favorite quote from my time with her is: “Remember the one you have been waiting for is you.” Your true soul is always with you, you can get that from no other. This is particularly powerful when counseling woman and girls, to improve self esteem and personal power.

**Major Analysis- Links to Jung and Adler**

Creativity, yoga and soul are linked to many of Adler’s key concepts. Social Interest or Gemeinschaftsgefühl is a primary direct link. We must be in service to others to be whole. Self-actualization aligns directly with the life tasks. Inferiority is linked to soul themes including self-concepts, such as self-esteem, and self-affirmation. Art Therapies, based on Jungian theory, exhibit the healing power of mandalas. The mandala is used as a basic tool to elicit self-awareness, self-expression, conflict resolution and healing (Stegelis, 2007). Drawing in this circular pattern reduces anxiety, stress and calms the mind. Jung had his own daily practice of mandala creation; Jung studied the soul by looking at the personal unconscious, unique to every person and the collective unconscious, which is a deep layer that represents the ancestral heritage of possibilities and the true basis of individual psyche (Jung 1931/1960, as cited in Zerbe Enn, 1994). He proposed that the unconscious consists of archetypal symbols that represent universal concepts. He felt the archetypes unite all of humankind through symbolic language. He believed that personal glimpses of truth can be discovered through the mirror in archetype and myth. Feminist and Jungian psychology use archetypes and goddess imagery and affirmation for self-discovery and understanding through universal mythical symbols (Zerbe Enns, 1994).
Key Findings

It was noted a key conclusion is that subtle as opposed to blatant affirmations are most effective and that self-affirmation works better when the party is unaware that the affirmation has a self-esteem bolstering effect. Striving purposefully for happiness and a boost in self-esteem can have the opposite effect and defeat the purpose (Sherman, Nelson, et al., 2009). This researcher will directly consider this finding when designing and defining a marketing strategy for a multimodal card deck and interactive journal to affirm women and girls through image, word, affirmation, yoga, and meditation combined. The affirming aspect would be subtle and interactive, not directly stated that the products purpose is for self-esteem bolstering outcomes.

Dividing Self Affirmation into two types of affirmation, attribute and value affirmation (Stapel & Van De Linde, 2010) the authors feel this distinction is necessary to deepen knowledge and understanding of the psychology of self-affirmation because it can be used to inform affirmation inspired interventions.

Limitations/Future Directions

Jung’s theories have been criticized for being vague, complex, esoteric, and difficult to understand, hence better left in the realms of art and religion (Stegelis, 1987). There needs to be more work done, this researcher agrees with the authors Henderson, Rosen et al. (2007), about integrating the scientific with the artistic and spiritual so there is a gained deeper respect and understanding of the soul and spirit realms of Jung’s classic studies. This researcher proposes future experiential work, which is the creation of a self-healing tool that merges soul and spirit modalities, art and yoga to impact soul and self awareness and self esteem in women and girls.
Gaps in Research

The gaps were found to be limited studies that blended the modalities of art and yoga. Hari Kirin Kaur Khalsa is a leader in this, and the Art of Yoga Project (AYP), designed as a gender specific intervention that combines yoga, visual arts and creative writing for young girls in the juvenile justice system are cutting edge views into this merging for soul awareness. Most information available is somewhat scarce but growing in art and yoga as separate entities. This researcher plans to continue work and research into the blending of collage and yoga as a means to “know thyself.”

“Your sacred space is where you can find yourself again and again.” Joseph Campbell

Experiential Response: Collage + Yoga = Soul Awareness in Women & Girls

Self Esteem- Self Help Tool

This researcher’s “Inher” peace, multimodal interactive card deck. This deck and journal will utilize art, and yoga, and affirmation to improve self esteem and self awareness in women and girls. This will be an interactive daily self-help tool that engages the user in an active way. This will be unique to other affirmation cards in that it will be engaging actively the participant with the cards, in art and yoga exercises. It will draw also on inspiration from the wisdom of Carl Jung and Alfred Adler as the cards are experienced. My hope is that the cards help women and girls discover their true selves, trust in themselves, and develop their own unique inner wisdom. I have designed this product in the spirit of self discovery and self love. The cards will go beyond simple affirmations, and ask the participant to explore, mind, body, and spirit, to know her soul, through art and yoga. It has worked for me through major life transitions and emotional trauma and my wish is to share this powerful gift with others, so they may know their own strength, beyond what they thought possible.
"The dignity of a woman’s life is infinite – her status immeasurable, her capacity unbounded, her role divine... In the fast changing world of today, her vision penetrates into the reality of the far beyond, the reality which endures beyond change.” ~ Maharishi Mahesh Yogi

“I think the artist has to be something like a whale, swimming with his mouth wide open, absorbing everything until he has what he really needs. When he finds that, he can start to make limitations. And then he really begins to grow.” ~ Romare Bearden
References


Harris, D. & Fitton M. (2010). The art of yoga project: A gender-responsive yoga and creative arts curriculum for girls in the California juvenile justice system. *International Journal of Yoga Therapy, 20,* 10-118


www.dictionary.reference.com – for glossary definitions

www.wikopedia.org/definitions/Self Affirmation

Yogi Bhajan Archival Lectures (1988), Los Angeles.


  *Journal of Counseling and Development, 73, 127-131.*