From Freud to Rogers to Maslow

The Origins and Theoretical Background of Life Orientations® Theory and Training

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Life Orientations® Training is an applied behavioral science system which fosters individual and organizational productivity. It starts by having individuals, pairs, or groups identify their basic orientations to life. These are called Supporting Giving, Controlling Taking, Conserving Holding, and Adapting Dealing.

With the orientations as reference points, six LIFO® strategies for growth and greater productivity are suggested. These are called Confirming, Capitalizing, Moderating, Bridging, Supplementing and Extending.

Underlying the Training is Life Orientations theory. It has its roots in psychoanalysis, self-actualization theory, client-centered therapy, and group dynamics. Though the origins are eclectic, their final synthesis in LIFO Training has blended smoothly as it has evolved over a 20-year period from my personal and professional experiences.

In a sense, Life Orientations Theory started with Freud. His concepts of psychosexual development and of character structure are the major source of the behavioral descriptions in the Training. Freud's early labels for the psycho-sexual stages of development were oral, anal, and phallic. Development, however, could be arrested at any level. He called this fixation. In Life Orientations Theory, the oral orientation is Supporting Giving, the phallic is Controlling Taking, and the anal is Conserving Holding. A fourth orientation is called Adapting Dealing and has no counterpart in psychoanalysis. The orientations in Life Orientations Theory are viewed as *givens and choices after childhood*, not as fixated character structure.

In Freud's early theorizing about developmental stages, he also suggested some character traits. But he had no theory of *generalized forms of stable functioning* or of consistent patterning. Freud, in 1908, and his followers Ernest Jones, in 1918, and Karl Abraham, in 1921, wrote papers that touched secondarily on character.[1] Their concerns were pathology, symptom formation, and the "choice of neurosis" as it relates to

1 Freud, Sigmund: Character and Anal Eroticism (1908). Collected Papers Vol. II, pp. 45-50. Basic Books, New York, 1959. Emest Jones: Anal Character Traits (1918). Papers on Psychoanalysis, pp. 531-555. William Wood, Baltimore, 1938. Karl Abraham: Contributions to the Theory of Anal Character (1921). Selected Papers on Psychoanalysis, pp. 370-392, Basic Books, New York, 1957.

2 Reich, Wilhelm: Character Analysis (1933), p. 144. Orgone Institute Press, New York, 1949.

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From Freud to Rogers to Maslow

being fixated at a particular level of psycho-sexual development.

Wilhelm Reich, in 1933, first used the concept of character to describe general and stabilized ways of functioning.[2] But while his focus was on character as a total formation, it was as a neurotic solution to infantile, instinctual conflict around the instinctual drives of sex and aggression. Unlike Freud, Jones and Abraham, Reich did not see character as a defensive way of combating infantile conflict. But when these defenses ultimately crystallized and became hardened and detached from their origins, and became independent of their original instinctual drives and conflicts, then that was termed "character." Character, as defined by Reich, was an a attempt at mastery over the conflicts and impulses, and character bound the impulses in a stable way. This he called "character armor."

In Life Orientations Theory, the orientations to life (character orientations) are also viewed as generalized and stable forms of functioning that have autonomy and independence from their early source. However, the orientations are not viewed as defenses, hardened and neurotic, but as modes, first of a productive, fully functioning person. Secondly, these orientations can be productive modes to handle defensive conditions stimulated by the external world. They become unproductive as defenses only when they are used to excess.

If the unproductive excessive behavior has greater frequency than the fully functioning, productive behavior, then it can be said that the person is using his or her orientations in a "neurotic," defensive way. If a person has continually responded in the unproductive excessive mode, so that it has become habitualized, even though there is no longer a real threat in the environment, then "character armor" is a distinct possibility, and it may represent total functioning.

Like Reich's theory, Life Orientations theory formulates character orientations as general forms of functioning with a stable existence. Unlike his, my theory holds that orientations have a productive, independent function, and are not used solely for defensive purposes.

Many years after Reich's contribution, Erich Fromm, in 1947, and Erik H. Erikson, in 1950, added new dimensions to character orientations and character development.[3] Fromm blended his theory of character orientations with a more modern concept of people having both productive and unproductive behavior.

Following a different path, Erikson illustrated in detail how character orientations are general forms of functioning, and he formulated a theory outlining the progressive steps in the development of character.

Erikson, along with his new formulations of the psycho-sexual stages of development, added the child's psycho-motor development as a parallel and intertwined process. A developmental phase was no longer a matter of the random fate of the instinct, but was focused into social ways of functioning, a frame of mind and an attitude.

In fact, Erikson extended the physiological and psycho-sexual development of the child into a series of psycho-social crises.[4] For example, the oral phase of development which is generated by sensory-kinesthetic development focuses the feeding-feeling child on "to get, to give in return," which then leads to the psycho-social crisis of developing *trust versus mistrust*.

The anal phase follows muscular development which then centers the child "to hold on or to let go," which in turn fosters a psycho-social crisis around developing *autonomy versus shame and doubt*.

In the third traditional psycho-analytic phallic stage of development, Erikson added the implication of new skills in locomotion, "to go after things and intrude."

3 Fromm, Erich: Man For Himself. Fawcett Publications, Greenwich, Conn. 1947. Erikson, Erik: Childhood and Society. Norton, New York, 1950.

4 Erikson, Erik: Identity and the Life Cycle, Psychological Issues, Vol 1, No. 1. International Universities Press, New York, 1959.

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From Freud to Rogers to Maslow

The psycho-social crisis at this stage is the development of *initiative versus guilt*.

Going beyond the tradition of psychoanalysis, Erikson extended the study of human development past childhood through adulthood. He also broke with the absolute idea of fixation— getting stuck in one psycho-sexual stage. He believed that there could be unresolved psycho-social issues at any level, but a person would not necessarily be fixated at that level. Satisfactory development at the next stage was possible.

Going further, Erikson says that development does not stop at childhood as Freud and his early followers formulated. Erikson adds four stages of adult growth with their parallel social crisis. The stages are *identity* (to be oneself and to share it) versus *diffusion* (not to be oneself), *intimacy* (to lose and find oneself in another) versus *isolation* (to withdraw from another), *generativity* (to make be and to take care of) versus *self-absorption* (strive for more), *integrity* (to be through having been and to face not being) versus *despair* (running from facing not being).

Though the four orientations to life in Life Orientations Theory reflect Erikson's social implications of orientations, they are conceptualized as adult choices. The choices are made *after* experiencing the orientations in earlier psycho-sexual stages of childhood.

In Life Orientations Theory, Supporting Giving (oral), Conserving Holding (anal), and Controlling Taking (phallic) are seen as generalized stable forms of functioning, and as optional ways of successfully coping, free from "instinctual," "conflicting," "neurotic," or "armored" origins in childhood, similar to the psychoanalysts who emphasized ego psychology.[5] Orientations are viable psycho-social *choices* to cope with the adult world.

Life Orientations Training makes possible the identification of these choices, their psycho-social value, and their negative consequences. Furthermore, the Training makes available learning opportunities to experience the values of all orientations, and makes it possible to incorporate all three modes of functioning into one's own psycho-social repertoire. As a result, people can better cope and understand the personal and social trade-offs of each orientation and the mutual impact of different or similar orientations on a relationship.

Following Erikson's extension of character development into all ages of adult life, Life Orientations Theory also outlines the differences at each stage of adult development according to an individual's choice of orientations. Adults go through the life cycle facing the same psycho-social issues at every stage, but there are distinct individual differences that stem from their choice of orientations.

For example, all psycho-social issues such as trust, autonomy, initiative, intimacy, generativity, integrity, are not the monopoly of any stage of character development. They are, in fact, characteristically influenced by the choice of orientations. There are four unique ways to manifest trust, autonomy, initiative, and so forth, depending upon which character orientation one chooses and favors.

Erich Fromm, on the other hand, in conceptualizing character orientations and their development, remained close to Freud.[6] But as a sociologist, psychoanalyst, and social philosopher, Fromm added two important new elements—the marketing orientation and the concept of productive and unproductive orientations. He was able to add these dimensions because he saw a limitation in Freud's belief that character traits were the result of various forms of instinctual drive diverted into sublimation or converted into reaction formation. Following Harry Stack Sullivan's neo-Freudian emphasis on interpersonal relationships,[7] Fromm relates development of character orientations to an individual's relatedness to others,

5 Hartmann, Heinz: Ego Psychology and the Problem of Adaptation. International Universities Press, New York, 1958.

6 Fromm, Erich, op. cit. pp. 47-122.

7 Sullivan, Harry Stack: The Interpersonal Theory of Psychology. Norton, New York, 1953.

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to nature, to society and to oneself—not to sexual energy, as described in Freud's libido theory.

But Fromm still follows Freud in believing that character traits are not behavior traits. Character traits *underlie* outward behavior and must be inferred from the outer behavior. The character traits are a powerful force influencing behavior, and the basic entity in character is not a particular trait but a total organization. He called it "orientation of character." This orientation of character develops from two specific kinds of relatedness to the world: acquiring and assimilating *things*, and reacting to *people*. The former he calls assimilation and the latter socialization.

Orientations, then, are the ways the individual relates to the world, and they constitute the core of character. Character, defined by Fromm, is the relatively permanent form in which human energy is canalized in the process of assimilation and socialization. Fromm considers these character systems—orientations—the human substitute for instincts in animals.

With assimilation and socialization as the two factors in the development of orientations, Fromm describes four types of character. He designates them as "unproductive orientations" and calls them the Receptive orientation, the Exploitative orientation, the Hoarding orientation, and the Marketing orientation.

In his descriptions and labels of these unproductive orientations, there is an extremely negative view. In Life Orientations Theory, the unproductive aspects of orientations are called excesses. There are no designations for a separate *unproductive* orientation. There is only the excess of a *unitary* orientation, having both productive (strengths) and unproductive (excess) aspects. Though Fromm finally accedes to the position that unproductive orientations can have positive aspects, these positive parts only exist to the degree the person has generated what Fromm calls a productive orientation. This is a superordinate orientation which regulates the other four unproductive ones.

As Fromm's labels suggest (except Marketing), the orientation descriptions are psychoanalytic and pessimistic. Receptive is the oral, passive character; Exploitative is the phallic, aggressive character; Hoarding is the anal-retentive character.

The Marketing orientation, Fromm explains, is a phenomenon of the modern era resulting from economic functions in modern society. Exchange value of commodities is related to people who are now seen as commodities connected to supply and demand. In this orientation, personality plays a predominant role, and "putting one's self across" and being saleable is paramount. If people experience themselves as a commodity, or their value is related to personal acceptance by those who need their services or who employ them, then they have a marketing orientation.

Fromm's model is illuminating, but it is complex, and at times confusing. By describing four unproductive character systems as both negative and positive, regulated by an overall, general orientation called Productive, he establishes the Productive orientation as an ideal model. This places the other unproductive orientations in an inferior position, making personal identification with them difficult.

From an applied behavioral science viewpoint, this is, generally, a negative model with negative language. This would not lend itself to public application or public acceptance. Fromm's labels and the psychoanalytic language are burdened with judgment and the inadequacy of everyone but the scientist. As a social commentary, or a fresh discourse on character, it makes an inestimable contribution. But the nature of the model makes its transfer to human performance in everyday life unlikely.

One other limitation occurs around Fromm's formulation of the marketing orientation. Something of Fromm's European background comes through in his description of the absurd outcome of commercialization on the human being. In the marketing orienta-

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tion, there is the taint of the "Ugly American" and the "Death of a Salesman."

From fifteen years' experience with Life Orientations Training, and from the statistical information from the Life Orientations survey,[8] the marketing orientation as a preferred character system appears far less frequently in our sample than the other three orientations. This is not to imply that this orientation is not essential. But, clearly, the marketing orientation (modified and called Adapting Dealing) is this country's least preferred orientation. In the past fifteen years, the only occasion that the Adapting Dealing orientation appeared as a predominant one was when I conducted a seminar in the state of Wyoming. This was for professionals of both sexes representing many different health disciplines.

Unlike the general adult population,[9] school children in the fifth and sixth grades strongly prefer the Adapting Dealing orientation.[10] In sharp distinction to Erich Fromm's interpretation of the behavior in the "marketing" orientation, the position of Life Orientations Theory is that this orientation has a lot less to do with the socio-economic values of the modern era, being saleable and exercising one's exchange value as a commodity, and more to do with *pleasing and making oneself adaptable* to fulfill one's needs—as children must do when they are young and in the process of socialization with their parents and older siblings.

Finally, Fromm's concept of Productivity and the Productive orientation must be examined. He indicates that Freud and his followers gave a detailed analysis of the neurotic character, known also as the pre-genital character. What was missing, says Fromm, was the character of the "normal," "mature," "healthy" personality. Though Freud wrote about the Genital character (his mature, healthy model of a person), it was vaguely developed. It was described as a character structure of a person in whom the oral and anal sexual energy (the libido) had been subordinated to the dominance of genital sexuality. Maturity was then judged completed when there was a satisfactory sexual relationship with the opposite sex, and when someone was functioning well in the sexual and social spheres of life.

In contrast to Freud, "productiveness," explains Fromm," is [a person's] ability to use [their] powers and to realize the potentialities inherent in [them]" (*inclusive language supplied*).This foreshadowed Abraham Maslow's concept of self-actualization.[11]

In Fromm's definition, he emphasizes man's freedom to experience himself as the embodiment of his powers, that he is the actor and feels at one with them, not masked or alienated from them. This was more fully developed in his book, *Escape from Freedom*.[12] It would be difficult, in Fromm's terms, if not impossible, to have a productive character in a totalitarian state dominated by an authoritarian character. Man must be free, and not be dependent on someone who controls his powers.

His definition of productive, Fromm adds, is not to be confused with being able to produce something as would an artist or artisan. No product need be involved. Nor does it mean being an active person. There can be non-productive activity. It does mean the full use of power and potentialities, using one's full capacity. Full use of power does not mean to exert power *over* or to dominate others. Productiveness, in his definition, is an attitude, a way of being *related* to the world.

There are two ways to relate to the world, *reproductively* and *generatively*. Relating reproductively means

8 Atkins, Stuart: LIFO® Trainer's Manual. Business Consultants Network, Inc, Los Angeles, 2004.

9 Atkins, Stuart: Ibid.

10 Life Orientations® Training for Children: report of two training workshops for children, Business Consultants Network, Inc. , Los Angeles.

11 Maslow, Abraham: Motivation and Personality. Harper & Row, New York, 1970.

12 Fromm, Erich: Escape from Freedom. Farrar & Reinhart, New York, 1941.

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to reproduce reality as it is, like a film making a literal record of it. Relating generatively means enlivening reality by re-creating it spontaneously through one's own reason and power. Sanity is also related to the balance between these two modes, as well as productiveness.

Productiveness is the something new that emerges as these two poles of reproductivity and generativity dynamically interact. The productive orientation, Fromm believes, can be involved in producing products, systems of thought, works of art, and material things, but the most important object of the productive orientation is man himself.

So it is with this kind of productiveness, the full use of potentiality, power, and reality that controls the various unproductive character orientations—the receptive, exploitative, hoarding, and marketing. The amount of productive orientation present determines to what degree the unproductive orientations will be used positively or negatively.

In Life Orientations Theory, productiveness is viewed differently. All four orientations can be used productively or unproductively. There is no superordinate orientation acting as a regulator over the unproductive orientations. And, in Life Orientations Training, people are given guidelines to insure the full use of the power and potential inherent in any of the four orientations.

Productivity, in Life Orientations terms, is defined as the full use of one's own strengths and uniqueness *in relation to* the full use of the strengths and uniqueness of others. Being productive or unproductive can occur under three separate conditions—favorable, conflict, or stress. When the strength and uniqueness of all are being acknowledged, when people's differences and similarities are being managed to reach a common goal, it can be said that an individual, pair, or a group is productive.

In less philosophic terms, in the language of daily life, Life Orientations Training attacks the five enemies of human productivity:

Five Blocks to Full Use of Power and Potentiality

1. WASTED EFFORT from overdoing tasks and assignments, and doing what is not necessary.
2. MAJOR MISTAKES caused by missing information and limited perspective on plans and decisions.
3. LOST OPPORTUNITY when available options are screened out by blind spots.
4. UNRESOLVED DIFFERENCES in key relationships creating continuous competition over whose way is the better way.
5. EXCESSIVE STRESS which wears down vitality and alienates people from their power and from each other.

If people are to have the energy to build a "productive orientation," in Fromm's terms, or to "self-actualize" themselves, in Maslow's terms, then they must cope with these less philosophical and more applied problems. This is the mission of LIFO Training, to encourage progressive mastery over the five blocks to human productivity and self-actualization.

Life Orientations Training accomplishes this by helping people identify, understand, appreciate, and fully utilize their character orientations. And to complete human "relatedness," people also learn to enable others to express their uniqueness and learn to develop interpersonal skills and strategies to accomplish this. If this is accomplished, people will be related, and in Fromm's view, they will overcome a major obstacle in human existence—*maintaining the use of power and individuality, while being closely related to others*.

In 1954, seven years after Erich Fromm published his ideas on productivity and suggested the need for studying the healthy person, Abraham Maslow developed his concepts of self-actualization. He also "studied" the healthy, normal personality as an antidote to

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From Freud to Rogers to Maslow

the emphasis of pathology in psychoanalysis.[13] His concept of self-actualization parallels the concept of the fully functioning personality conceived by Carl Rogers.[14] In Maslow's framework, however, he makes room for the unproductive aspects of his self actualized people. He reports that they experience anxiety and guilt, and can be ruthless in pursuing their mission and purpose. Unlike Rogers, Maslow believes that the productive person is not perfect. But there is no theory to tie in those unproductive aspects to the productive side.

Though Maslow selects out-of-the-ordinary people as examples of healthy, self actualized personalities—Abraham Lincoln, Albert Einstein, Eleanor Roosevelt, William James, to name a few—he believes that the ordinary person can self-actualize and realize their full capacities.

These capacities need only be liberated by filling basic needs which are in a hierarchy. The highest need in the hierarchy is self-actualization. But lower in the hierarchy, and in ascending order, are physiological needs, safety needs, belonging needs, and esteem needs. Since these needs must be fulfilled from lower to higher, human productivity, or self-actualization, has to wait its turn at the top of the need pyramid.

In Life Orientations Training, *all* the needs are being filled *simultaneously*. Built into the process and structure of the Training is a telescoping effect which compresses the hierarchy at every stage of the training, and concurrently engages the process of self-actualization.

Further, Life Orientations Training fills Maslow's criteria for the eight ways people can self-actualize:[15]

1. To become more aware of what is going on around, between, and within people.
2. To see life as a process of choices having positive and negative aspects, but to choose for growth even though there are risks.
3. To get in touch with the core and essential inner nature of ourselves including our values, tastes, and temperament.
4. To be honest about our needs and actions and take responsibility for them.
5. To learn to trust our judgment about ourselves and our needs so that we can make better life choices.
6. To continually develop our potentialities and see self-actualization not as an end-state, but as a never-ending process.
7. To have more peak experiences in which we are more aware, think, feel, and act more clearly and accurately.
8. To recognize our defenses and the way we distort our self-image and the image of the external world, and to work to remove these defenses.

It is interesting to note that Maslow's eight paths to self-actualization fill Fromm's two criteria for developing a productive orientation—relating to the world reproductively (recording reality more as it is) and generatively (putting one's own mark on reality by re-creating it through one's own uniqueness).

In Life Orientations Theory, a major concept relating to productivity and self actualization is excess. The psychology of excess dates as far back as the 5th Century B.C., when Lao Tzu[16] stated that "If you over-sharpen the blade, the edge will soon blunt." He also wrote that "the wise man is sharp but not cutting, pointed but

13 Maslow, Abraham: Motivation and Personality. op. cit. pp. 149-202.

14 Rogers, Carl: Formulations of the Person and the Social Context.Psychology: A Study of a Science, Vol. 3. Koch, Sigmund ed., McGraw Hill, New York, 1959.

15 Maslow, Abraham: The Far Reaches of Human Nature. Viking Press, New York, 1971.

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not piercing, straightforward but not unrestrained, and brilliant but not blinding." And in the summary wisdom of Lao Tzu, "More is less and less is more."

William James also identified the human problem of excess and its effect on productivity.[17] He called it the "errors of excess." Love when excessive becomes possessiveness, an excess of loyalty becomes fanaticism. Any virtue can "diminish" the person when it is allowed to be expressed in its extreme form.

These errors of excess come from a certain blindness, according to James. This blindness, or lack of awareness, expresses itself in relationships, particularly in our inability to understand one another. If we are presumptuous and try to decide for others what is good for them, what their needs are, or what they should be taught, then we fall into error. Our failure to be aware of our blindness with one another, James contends, is a major source of our unhappiness with one another.

In Life Orientations Training, a major growth strategy called Bridging helps us recognize and overcome our "blindness" to the differences in the needs and values of others. It also helps us better understand the "inner reality" of other people and helps us stop presuming that we know what is good for others and what their needs are.

However, in Life Orientations Theory, excess does not stem from this blindness we have with one another. Rather, it is a consequence of self-reinforcement when we derive pleasure from the use of our orientations and their strengths. When we over-do things, when we exaggerate our virtues, it is often for our own self-satisfaction.

Another source of excess in Life Orientations Theory is unresolved stress. When threats to our needs are perceived, or when we are blocked from using our own preferred orientations, we experience stress. If we are unable to cope with these threats or to fill our needs, then, as Hans Selye says, we experience distress.[18] This is when we over-react with our strengths and virtues and become excessive.

Life Orientations Training also follows Carl Rogers' client-centered perspective and theory of therapy.[19] In seeking self-actualization and behavioral change in clients, the Training places the responsibility and control for growth in the hands of the client. The professional acts in the role of guide and clarifier as the client-learner follows the structure and sequence of the Training process.

Though there are a series of cognitive and structured exercises as stimuli, the rate of revelation and the depth of insight are controlled by the client. *Clients are in charge of their own analysis, interpretation, and learning within the given framework of the four orientations to life and the six strategies for growth*.

The Training starts with another Rogerian concept, "unconditional positive regard" for the client. By focusing on the client's strengths and productive functioning, self-acceptance is generated as the forerunner for change. The Life Orientations concepts, the materials, and the Trainer withhold judgment and evaluation of the client, and the client can then experience unconditional positive regard.

In outlining the helping process and the helping relationship, Rogers provides clarity and form for the integration of all kinds of helping.[20] Life Orientations

16 Lao Tzu, (Translated by D.C Lau). Tao Te Ching. Penguin, New York, 1964.

17 James, William. Talks to Teachers on Psychology and to Students on Life's Ideals (1899). Henry Holt & Co., Dover, New York, 1950.

18 Selye, Hans: Stress without Distress. Lippincott, Philadelphia, 1974.

19 Rogers, Carl: Client-Centered Therapy. Houghton Mifflin, New York, 1951.

continued

From Freud to Rogers to Maslow

Training follows these steps in the helping relationship as outlined by Rogers:

1. The situation is defined.
2. There is encouragement of free expression.
3. The trainer accepts and clarifies.
4. There is expression of positive feelings.
5. There is a recognition of positive impulses for growth.
6. Insight develops.
7. Choices are clarified.
8. Positive action is generated.
9. More insight develops.
10. Increased autonomy.

Many of the concepts of Rogers and Maslow have found wide acceptance in the field of education and business and industry. Their positive view of human functioning, their ego-enhancing language, their emphasis on growth and the helping relationship, rather than on pathology, have made them major contributors to the field of applied behavioral science. Rogers became an encounter group therapist and practitioner.[21] Much of his theory and practice about group growth and functioning were applications of his theories on individual personality and growth.

In 1962, Maslow was sponsored by Andrew Kay, Owner and President of Non-Linear Systems, an electronics firm in Southern California. Kay, after attending a National Training Laboratories program for company presidents, offered his company as a laboratory to "test" the theories of leading scientists from universities across the country. Maslow's concepts were being applied in the group dynamics movement at the National Training Laboratories where Kay learned of Maslow. Kay sponsored Maslow's time to write *Toward a Psychology of Being*.[22] During the summer of 1963, Maslow visited Non-Linear Systems again. He wanted to apply his theories of a healthy, self-actualized person to an organization. The result was his book, Eupsychian Management.[23]

On a personal note, Andrew Kay was my client in 1960, when my field of specialization as a consultant was individual counseling and psychological testing. My interest in group dynamics was heightened by the behavioral science activity going on at Non-Linear. One of the behavioral scientists consulting with the company was James V. Clark from UCLA. In 1964, he invited me to become one of seven professionals he had chosen from across the country to participate in the first T-group intern program on the West Coast, sponsored by UCLA and the National Training Laboratories. Andrew Kay provided four separate working units of his company in which the interns could apply their newly learned group skills.

In T-groups, unlike individual counseling, there were no closed sessions. If anything was worth discussing, the norm was to disclose it in the group. All were privileged to the same information simultaneously. And it was possible to solve problems with all the parties present, rather than relying on random transfer of learning from a series of individual sessions.

During a luncheon discussion with Maslow, I mentioned my reluctance to write up my exciting new experiences in group work. My interest was not research. It was in recounting the unusual events of the group experience. Maslow encouraged me to write such an article because the events illustrated peak experiences. The

20 Rogers, Carl: Counseling and Psychotherapy. p. 30-44. Houghton Mifflin, New York, 1942.

21 Rogers, Carl. Carl Rogers on Encounter Groups. Harper & Row, New York, 1970.

22 Maslow, Abraham: Toward a Psychology of Being. Van Nostrand, N.J., 1962.

23 Maslow, Abraham: Eupsychian Management. Irwin, Illinois, 1965.

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scientific value of this, he pointed out, was that peak experiences could lead the way for relevant research.

From these experiences, and from publishing the article,[24] I became an associate of the NTL Institute of Applied Behavioral Science, and I traveled throughout the United States conducting T-groups and programs in human relations and group dynamics. The theoretical and applied framework of the T-group and Laboratory Method was striking and hardhitting. It was engaging, encountering, and required an extended awareness in order to attend to the dynamics of a group and to the interaction of fifteen people instead of one.

T-groups (T for training) and the Laboratory method derived their impetus from the work of Kurt Lewin.[25] He developed a new language and model for describing the cause of individual behavior at a certain moment in time in a social context. He called it "life space." He emphasized the importance of painstaking observation of natural events and the present moment, the here and now. Recognizing the interdependence of all parts of an event, Lewin believed that behavioral scientists should not concentrate independently on cognition, learning, motivation, personality, and social influence, or culture. Behavior should be viewed from the standpoint of the interaction of the parts as a whole, with causation viewed as contemporary to the events, happening in the present and not, as in psychoanalysis, happening from the forces in the past.[26]

Lewin's investigations led him to the study of reward and punishment, conflict, and how these were induced by other people. In turn, that focused his interest on how one person, a group leader, for instance, could induce forces on a person to either help or restrict. In comparing his experiences in Germany with those in the United States, he was struck by the differences in leadership and the social-emotional atmosphere of groups. What followed was his classic study, in 1939, of types of leadership and of social atmospheres.[27]

Authoritarian, democratic, and laissez-faire leadership types and their induced social climates and group behaviors became a central focus in education, industry, health sciences, and government. It and helping people. Managers, teachers, therapists, nurses, doctors, social workers, and community workers were all examined and evaluated for their ability to be democratic, the ideal model of leader and member behavior.

Workshops were established to train leaders in democratic principles and practices. One such workshop took place at the State Teachers College in New Britain, Connecticut in the summer of 1946.[28] The goal was to develop more effective local leaders in facilitating the understanding of, and compliance with, the Fair Employment Practices Act. Kurt Lewin and Ronald Lippitt headed the research team from the Research Center for Group Dynamics, then located at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The training leaders were Kenneth D. Benne from Columbia University and Leland P. Bradford of the National Education Association, as well as Ronald Lippitt, who had a dual role as trainer and researcher.

Discussion was the principal methodology of the workshop, with some roleplaying to diagnose problems and practice new approaches. Researchers were attached to the three learning groups to study the behavioral interactions of the participants. Early in the

24 Atkins, Stuart and Kuriloff, Arthur H.: T-Group for a Work Team. Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, Vol. 2, No. 1. pp. 63-9. 1966.

25 Lewin, Kurt: Principles of Topological Psychology. McGraw Hill, New York, 1936.

26 Lewin, Kurt: A Dynamic Theory of Personality. McGraw Hill, New York, 1935.

27 Lewin, Kurt; Lippitt, Ronald; White, Robert: Patterns of Aggression in Experimentally Created Social Climates. Journal of Social Psychology 1939, pp. 271-279.

28 Bradford, Leland P.; Gibb, Jack R.; Benne, Kenneth D.: T-Group Theory and Laboratory Methods. John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York, 1964.

continued

From Freud to Rogers to Maslow

workshop, Kurt Lewin arranged evening meetings for the training staff and research team to review their observations of what was happening in the three groups. This included analysis and interpretation of leader, member, and overall group behavior.

Some participants asked to join these evening meetings, and the impact of hearing the descriptions and analysis of their behavior was astonishing. This confirmed Lewin's theory of the power in the moment. Discussions in the evenings around these process observations of the "here-and-now" behavior created a secondary evening workshop. The training staff realized that this procedure was powerful and that a process of re-education had been discovered inadvertently.

Kurt Lewin died in early 1947, but the training staff of the leadership workshop planned and implemented another workshop in Bethel, Maine in the summer of 1947. The workshop was content-laden with discussions around the most effective agenda for such workshops. Five small, ongoing groups were formed which were called BST groups (Basic Skills Training).

Because the workshop participants represented such a variety of occupations and professional disciplines, some common denominator needed to be identified to focus and integrate their learning. The workshop faculty designated the heterogeneous participants as "change agents." The Basic Skills Training groups, then, were ideal for training participants in the skills of human relations to be better change agents. They would be responsible for democratically inducing individual and social change in their back-home organizations.

By 1949, the NTL staff determined that the agenda of the BST group was overloaded by trying to juggle specific content and here-and-now process observations. The process observations were meant to foster group functioning and to advance the content learning. But it proved to be too much. (Content versus process became, and still is, a crucial variable in designing learning experiences.)

In 1949 and 1950, because of the intentional diversity of the new NTL staff, a shift took place in the nature of the program. The training content—what change agents needed to know and do to impact large social institutions—refocused to process observations of personal, interpersonal, and small-group behavior. This new process removed all formal content. Now, the group's agenda was to study itself, its members, its leaders, and their interaction.

The Lewinian and sociological emphasis became secondary in importance to the language and concepts of psychoanalysis and the client-centered theory of Carl Rogers. Along with this changing emphasis, the "BST" designation was dropped in favor of just "T-Groups."

Studying change and democratic values was still a major goal of the T-group and of the training laboratory. But the main activity became the exploration of the helping relationship.

The goal in training was the prevention of human difficulty through the development of "normal" people. Many diverse professionals in the helping fields were attracted to NTL and the T-group and Laboratory method. They were a crusading force in focusing other professionals toward helping "normal" people understand themselves and others better to solve individual and group problems. Their hope was that help would come before behavior became "abnormal," before there was a need to seek professional help. Maslow's self-actualization theory and emphasis on healthy personalities became a supportive force in NTL's quiet crusade.

At UCLA, in the late '50s and through the '60s, the Institute of Industrial Relations sponsored a West Coast version of the T-group, called Sensitivity Training. Their approach no longer centered on improving group functioning, the development of interpersonal skills, or the intellectual discussion of human relations problems. They were interested in "the total enhancement of the individual and the unfolding of a fully functioning personality."[29]

continued

From Freud to Rogers to Maslow

This meant helping individuals to experience people and events more fully, to know themselves more intimately and accurately, to find more meaning in life, and to be committed to growth and to ever-increasing personal power. Studying the desire to control others and be controlled, to manage love and anger, and to overcome loneliness, were also essential elements of Sensitivity Training.

Whether intentional or not, these purposes were consistent with Carl Rogers' theories and Erich Fromm's view of human productivity. Further, Sensitivity Training and T-groups were devoted to the development of theories and methodologies to apply the behavioral sciences to individuals, pairs, or groups. As a result, the National Training Laboratories changed its name to the NTL Institute for Applied Behavioral Science.

As a T-group trainer for NTL and a sensitivity trainer at UCLA from 1965 to 1972, I experienced the theory and practice of both T-groups and Sensitivity Training. These were laboratories in social experimentation in which the subjects could study themselves, and each other, in action. This meant that the only agenda or content was in the form of making something out of "nothing." In order to learn about oneself, and to learn about how groups work, people had to wallow in ambiguity and muddle through together. This was a simple invention, producing a dilemma by having no agenda. In the process of making this void productive, people realized that they were the agenda. To study oneself in collaboration with others, publicly, is an anxious and awesome experience.Difficult but rewarding as this can be, the complexity and complications magnify many times when the laboratory is attempted in an organizational setting.[30] Personal revelations can become embarrassing and even inappropriate in work groups.

As a result, another version of the laboratory method emerged. The emphasis was back to the content of the group's tasks, and the technical matters of group, and individual and group process observations were made only to facilitate the work of the group.

Becoming more sophisticated, these methods evolved into a movement called Organizational Development,[31] sponsored at first as a division of NTL. Much of the technology was geared to *entire organizations* as the client and OD practitioners worked throughout many departments simultaneously to effect major changes in all parts of the system. This was reminiscent of the early NTL hopes of effecting massive social change through the training of change agents based on the social emphasis of Kurt Lewin.

OD, as a massive change technology, did not prove practical, though many of its technologies—team building, conflict resolution, survey-feedback—are still widely practiced. But somewhere between the task focus of organizational development and the embarrassment of personal revelations in T-groups and Sensitivity Training, there was a need in the late sixties for structured, more manageable, less threatening, but personal ways of helping individuals and groups in a work setting.

In February of 1967, my efforts to fill that need began in the development of Life Orientations Theory and its application through LIFO Training. Fifteen years have now passed, and I have distilled and crystallized the learning of those years in this book.

29 Weschler, Irving; Massarik, Fred; Tannenbaum, Robert: *The Self in Process: A Sensitivity Training Emphasis. Issues in Human Relations Training*—Selected Readings Series No. 5. NTL, Washington, D.C. 1962.

30 Atkins, Stuart and Kuriloff Arthur H.: T-Group for a Work Team op. cit.

31 Burke, Warner W., and Hornstein, Harvey A.: The Social Technology of Organizational Development. NTL Learning Resources, Inc., Washington, D.C., 1972.

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