

“Thank you, Fritz, for the lecture. I’ve got a good notion about implosion, I learned something more about resentments, and most of all I begin to realize some complications in doing therapy. I agree that any partial approach like bursting the armor or talking about experiences is one-sided and thus inefficient.”

Yes. And I especially condemn those one-siders if they believe that their segmental approach is a panacea, a cure-all.

“Would you say that this one-sided approach also applies to Ida Rolf’s “physical” re-conditioning? What is she doing? Is she doing something like the armor-busting of the Reichians?”

Sometimes she does. I would rather call this an accidental by-product, especially if you have a muscular abstraction as a memory.

“I don’t understand this at all. This really sounds like gobble de gook to me: a muscular abstraction of a memory!”

I spoke about conditioned rats whose brains were pulverized and fed to others. That substance had a real memory or *mneme*, organismic memory.

Now, any incident has several aspects: the words that are spoken, the emotions we feel, the pictures we see, movements we observe, thoughts and associations we have, a pain we sense, etc. From all those thousand impressions we abstract a certain number to be filed away in our memory bank to serve as the official representative of that incident. They usually become a kind of stereotyped cliché. We might even adorn it or delete some of it.

Now if one abstraction comes up, then often the total context becomes available. This is not a linear association, although it is often called so, but a comprehensive gestalt.

Thus, if Ida touches a sore spot, which is what the muscles remember, then the total context, including the unexpressed emotions and pictures, might come up and be made available for assimilation and integration.

By itself this recovered memory has as little value as the recovered memories of Freud or Reich. But if a patient hangs on to a postural fault—"as if" he is still in the original pain—then he has got the same chance of re-adjusting to the correct posture as the patient who hangs on to a dead mother—"as if" he still has to please her; he can realize that he has to please her no more, that he has been a victim of a hallucination. Both cases are "waking up" processes.

"And Ida really helped you with your heart trouble?"

This I cannot say. She certainly helped me with the main symptom: those angina pectoris pains that made life so miserable that I was willing to end it all. In this sense she saved my life.

"Did she break through to some memories?"

No. That I did with a psilocybin trip. No, her work was quite different. Those breakthroughs are merely a by-product, not an essential. Similarly to me, she works on a person's imbalance. The Reichians have an *heuristic* approach. They break the armor where they expect to find repressions. Ida has a *holistic* outlook, she looks at the whole body and tries to relocate whatever is out of kilter. She tears the sheath around the muscles apart to give the muscles breathing space, as she says, and she stimulates atrophied muscles.

"This tearing apart must be pretty painful."

Sometimes agonizing. I usually have a cigarette break after twenty minutes.

"Why does she not do this under an anesthetic?"

She claims she needs cooperation. In some places the muscle tissue is imploded and she works until you let go of the spasm.

I've had about fifty treatments. Usually she gives a planned series of ten.

"Are you through now?"

Not at all. First consider my age and that many of my implosions are very deep-seated. Only a small percentage of the improvement is retained. She has some good pupils now. One day I will be a naughty boy and try to be "Rolfed" under nitrous-oxide, laughing gas.

“So what is the connection with your heart trouble?”

In angina pectoris the muscles around your heart and in the left arm become very painful. This is probably nature’s way of stopping you from overworking your sick heart. So Ida opened up the cramps in all those muscles and I could breathe freely. I also had sometimes very painful, paralyzing backaches which have improved about 80-90%. Altogether you see that I have all the reasons to be deeply grateful.

“What kind of a person is she?”

A very powerful big angel. We are now combining Gestalt Therapy with her methods. Since I brought her to California, the interest in her work grows.

“How old is she?”

She must be my age.

“If she is that good, why is she not famous?”

It is the old story of advertising something good as a panacea. She is, of course, biased and is persuasive rather than factual, sometimes taking credit for something that is not the direct result of her work. Now in co-ordination with our work something good is emerging. People with deep mental kinks will not benefit fully from her, and people with chronic postural disturbances will limit the effectiveness of our therapy. We will even investigate if our co-operation will work with schizophrenics.

Structure and function are identical: Change a structure and you change its function; change a function and you change its structure.