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LET'S FIRST REVISIT THE MEANING OF LEISURE

“Leisure is a mental and spiritual attitude...not the result of spare time...it is an attitude of the mind, a condition of the soul ...it implies an inward calm, of silence. It means not being “busy,” but letting things happen. Leisure is a form of silence, of that silence which is the prerequisite of the apprehension of reality. Only the silent hear, and those who do not remain silent do not hear...Silence here does not mean noiselessness; it means more nearly that the soul’s power to answer to the reality of the world is left undisturbed. For leisure is a receptive attitude of mind, a contemplative attitude, and it is not only the occasion but also the capacity for steeping oneself in the whole of creation. Furthermore, there is a certain serenity in leisure... it is for those who are open to everything; not for those who grab and grab hold, but of those who leave the reins loose and who are free and easy themselves...Leisure is only possible when a [person] is at one with himself... it is a [person’s] happy and cheerful affirmation of his own being...

The point and justification of leisure are not that the functionary should function faultlessly and without a breakdown, but that the functionary should continue to be a [person] - and that means that he/she should not be wholly absorbed in the clear-cut milieu of his strictly limited function; the point is also that he/she should retain the faculty of grasping the world as a whole and realizing his full potentialities as an entity meant to reach Wholeness. Because Wholeness is what a [person] strives for, the power to achieve leisure is one of the fundamental powers of the human soul...The power to know leisure is the power to...reach out to superhuman, life-giving existential forces that refresh and renew us...Only in genuine leisure does a “gate to freedom” open. *The above comes from Joseph Pieper, Leisure, the Basis of Culture, 1952.*

I had an “aha” moment in Breckenridge, Colorado at an ATRA conference when an argument broke out in the lobby over the desire by some to drop leisure as the charism of the field. At one point, one of the arguers shouted, “I don’t even know what leisure is!” I realized right then that without an understanding of leisure and a commitment to it as the basis for a philosophy of therapeutic recreation, we were in for a long struggle for the soul of the field. *Cathy O’Keefe*

Have leisure and know that I am God. *Psalm 65*

We are “unleisurely”, that is the word that the Greeks used for daily toil and work, in order that we might have leisure. *Aristotle’s words as described by Pieper*

In Aristotle's view, the goal of leisure is happiness. That is why he viewed leisure as a higher pursuit than work. He said, "If happiness consists of virtuous activity, it must be the activity of the highest virtue, or in other words, of the best part of our nature. Cathy O'Keefe on Aristotle's contribution to our field.

Leisure comes from the Latin "licere" meaning freedom. It is the freedom to become your truest self. In this sense, truth is both intensely individual and unique and yet shares so many common elements across the human family that it creates community in the process. Cathy O'Keefe

***IF LEISURE AND FREEDOM ARE INTRINSICALLY JOINED,
LET'S EXAMINE THE TOPIC OF FREEDOM***

Nature intended that we need no great equipment for living happily; each one of us is able to make his own happiness. External things are of slight importance...All that is best for a [person] lies beyond the power of others. Lucius Seneca, Roman philosopher and statesman (4 bce - 65 ce).

To be freed from the belief that there is no freedom is indeed to be free. Martin Buber, Jewish philosopher and theologian (1878 - 1965).

Man is born free, but everywhere he is in chains. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Swiss philosopher (1712-1778).

Confined to a concentration camp, Victor Frankl, a German Jew and Psychiatrist, learned that his mind remained free in spite of his incarceration. He based an entire philosophy of patient care after the war on the belief that within the freedom of the mind, a person creates his/her own meaning for life. He worried that traditional treatments were not enough. He said, "More and more patients are crowding our clinics and consulting rooms complaining of an inner emptiness, a sense of the total and ultimate meaninglessness of their lives. We may define the existential vacuum as the frustration of what we may consider the most basic motivation force in man, and what we may call...the will to meaning." Frankl's work is cited in Plato! Not Prozac by author Lou Marinoff, Quill Press, (1999).

***IN FREEDOM AUTHENTIC MEANING IN LIFE IS CREATED.
LET'S EXAMINE THE TOPIC OF MEANING***

From Frankl:

"There is nothing in the world, I venture to say, that would so effectively help one to survive even the worse conditions than the knowledge that there is meaning in one's life...

One should not search for an abstract meaning of life. Everyone has his own specific vocation or mission to carry out in concrete assignment which demands fulfillment. Therein, he cannot be replaced, nor can his life be repeated. The question, then, is not

'what is the meaning of life' but 'what is the meaning of *my* life. He can only answer to life by answering for his own life; to life he can only respond by being responsible.

We can discover the meaning in life in three ways: (1) by creating a work or doing a deed; (2) by experiencing something or encountering someone; and (3) by the attitude we take toward unavoidable suffering...In the midst of the daily suffering and torture of the concentration camp, for the first time in my life I saw the truth as it is set into song by so many poets, proclaimed as the final wisdom by so many thinkers. The truth - that love is the ultimate and the highest goal to which man can aspire. Then I grasped the meaning of the greatest secret that human poetry and human thought and belief have to impart: *the salvation of man is through love and in love...*

Mental health is based on a certain degree of tension, the tension between what one has already achieved and what one still ought to accomplish, or the gap between what one is and what one should become. Such a tension is inherent in the human being and therefore is indispensable to mental well-being. I consider it a dangerous misconception of mental hygiene to assume that what man needs in the first place is 'homeostasis' a tensionless state."

The above quotes in this section come from Viktor Frankl, Jewish psychiatrist imprisoned at Auschwitz and Dachau during the Holocaust, Man's Search for Meaning. (1984). Washington Square Press.

Making meaning of life's experiences is, in and of itself, therapeutic. *Carl Jung*

MEANING GENERATES WISDOM, THE BASIS OF PHILOSOPHY LET'S LOOK AT THE TOPIC OF PHILOSOPHY

"Philosophy is something intermediate between theology and science." *Bertrand Russell*

Lou Marinoff, in Plato! Not Prozac, Quill Press, 1999, adds the following:

"Philosophy can draw from strengths from both sides without having to absorb the dogmas or weaknesses in either."

"...to me, no fortune seemed favorable unless it afforded leisure to apply oneself to philosophy, that no life was a happy one except insofar as it was lived in philosophy."
St. Augustine of Hippo (354-430)

**"We shall not cease from exploration
And at the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And to know the place for the first time."** *T.S. Eliot quoted by Marinoff.*

"When Socrates declared that the unexamined life is not worth living, he was urging for constant personal evaluation and striving for self-improvement as the highest calling..."

What good is life? What is good? What is life about? Why am I here? Why should I do the right thing? What is the right thing? These are not easy questions, and there are no easy answers or we wouldn't still be mulling them over. No two people will arrive at the same answers. But we all have a set of operating principles we work from, whether or not we are conscious of them and can enumerate them...Many people are coming to the realization that philosophical expertise encompasses logic, ethics, values, meaning, rationality, decision-making in situations of conflict or risk, and all the vast complexities that characterize human life...By getting a handle on their personal philosophies of life, sometimes with the help of the great thinkers of the past, people can build a framework for managing whatever they face and go into the next situation more solidly grounded and spiritually or philosophically whole...Philosophy was originally a way of life, not an academic discipline - a subject not only to be studied but applied.” *Lou Marinoff*

THE SCIENTIZATION OF ALL ILLS IN THIS CENTURY HAS RELEGATED PHILOSOPHY TO AN INFERIOR PLACE, UNWORTHY OF INPUT INTO MATTERS OF THE BODY AND MIND THAT HAD TRADITIONALLY BEEN ITS FOCUS.

LET'S LOOK AT THE IMPACT OF SCIENCE ON CARE OF THE WHOLE PERSON

“Behavioral psychology and its central stimulus-response theory regard a person as a kind of machine that can be conditioned or programmed for any desired result - you just need to find and use the right stimulus...Thinking of a human as no more than a creature responding in controllable ways to specific stimuli diminishes our humanness...Behavioral psychology will never yield a system of ethics, one of the key components of human life. “*Lou Marinoff, Plato! Not Prozac.*

“Marinoff explains that the word, *psychotherapy*, comes from the Greek *psukhe*, meaning soul, breath, or character. The word *therapeuein* means “to attend to.” If the purpose of psychotherapy is to attend to the soul or character of another, and leisure is one of the fundamental expressions of the soul, then the work of TR in mental health settings should surely be self-evident. But in the medical model, it remains terribly misunderstood. And our field seems to be doing all it can to make itself fit the scientific, medical model.” *Cathy O’Keefe*

“The biggest progress [in TR] has been made in realization and actualization of the fact that as a human service field, therapeutic recreation should focus on clients and patients as psychological human beings. Improved state of mind is important in and of itself, but also because it is necessary for achieving improvement in physical health and functioning. To this end, therapeutic recreation will make a huge difference if it can make people believe in themselves (e.g. self-efficacy) on the one hand and make them motivated about life and various activities on the other” *Seppo Iso Ahola being interviewed by Ken Mobily for the TRJ, Fourth Quarter, 2000 on the role of TR today.*

“...three forces have converged to bring prominence to outcomes in health care: (a) external accreditation agencies such as Joint Commission and the Rehabilitation Accreditation Commission; (b) third party payers such as insurance companies, and (c)

health care consumer groups. The newest focus is on defining quality, identifying clinical endpoints (outcomes), using clinical performance measures, and increasing accountability at all points of service. *Norma Stumbo, Ph.D., CTRS, in Outcome Measurement in Health Care: Implications for Therapeutic Recreation, ATRA Annual in TR, Volume 9, 2000.*

Typical patient outcomes for health care can be divided into four categories:

(a) change in clinical status (effect of treatment on patient's symptoms), (b) change in functionality (effect of treatment on patient's lifestyle), (c) change in utilization of medical resources (effect of treatment on using additional health care services), and (d) recidivism (examining patterns of relapse or re-entry into the medical system. *T.T. Gorski, as quoted by Stumbo in the above article.*

A big danger is the "bandwagon science" according to which people jump after the latest fads...Bandwagon science leads to shotgun research which is nothing more than waving the flag and directing people's attention to the latest fads. We need researchers who devote their careers to studying one or two phenomena, thereby providing a deeper understanding of the phenomenon in question. *Seppo Iso-Ahola, TRJ, Fourth Quarter, 2000.*

"My humanity is reduced when you refer to experiences of personal growth as outcomes and my life as a series of functions...

I am distressed that we have given over to surveyors and insurance companies a level of moral authority to define good care." *Cathy O'Keefe*

THE SCIENTIFIC INFLUENCE ON PATIENT CARE IS NOW BEING CHALLENGED LET'S LOOK AT THE TOPIC OF SPIRITUALITY

"Spirituality helps address issues tied intrinsically to disability but not addressed by functionalists: Why does evil happen? Why me? What does my life mean now? Is my value as a person tied to my ability to function? How can I restore or discover serenity/inner peace in spite of my limitations? What is there to live for?...

If we remain only in the realm of function we can avoid facing the essential spiritual questions - but that distances us unnecessarily from our patients who are steeped in spiritual questions. The charism created by the traditional medical model doesn't really serve positively to ensure professional boundaries but instead creates barriers to therapeutic interactions/experiences which could truly help in recovery...

When the spirit in us meets the spirit in our clients, some good greater than what each alone could experience is suddenly made possible... Compassion is the willingness to enter into the suffering of others not merely as an observer but as a partner and a friend." *The Nature of Suffering and The Goals of Medicine (1991)*

"The disabled person is at a disadvantage in a world constrained by functional evaluations... It is easier to maintain an attitude of fundamental respect for a person regardless of his ability to function mentally or physically when buoyed by a spiritual attitude towards all of life." *Lynne Underwood, (1999) A Working Model of Health:*

Spirituality and Religiousness as Resources: Applications to Persons with Disability. Journal of Religion, Disability and Health, Vol 3.

“It has been one of the most basic errors of the modern era of medicine to believe that patients cured of their diseases...are also healed; are whole again...The search for the cause of an illness is not helped by classical disease theory, which does not account for all the facts...

One of the skills in the art of great clinicians lies in coming as close as ethically possible to intimacy - for the access to the patient that it provides - while maintaining independence of action. Therein lies the capacity for maximum therapeutic power in the patient’s behalf..

Medical stories are different from everyday stories in one crucial aspect: They always have at least two characters: a person and that person’s body. (There are no persons without bodies, but there can be bodies without persons.) *Eric Cassell, The Nature of Suffering and the Goals of Medicine, Oxford Press, 1991.*

"Science based medicine can go only so far in caring for acute and critically ill patients. There often comes a time when something more is required. That something is prayer." *Holt-Ashley, Mary, RN, PhD, CNAA. Nurses Pray: Use of Prayer and Spirituality as a Complementary Therapy in the Intensive Care Setting. (2000). ACCN Clinical Issues. American Assoc. of Critical Care Nurses.*

"A growing number of scientists realize that science without spirituality is like a wave without the ocean." *M. Rutte. Spirituality in the health care workplace. (1998).*

"Total rehabilitation as a human service philosophy is designed to attend to the physical, mental, emotional, *spiritual*, social, and vocational aspects of life." *G.N. Wright (1997) Rehabilitation Counseling: Profession and Practice. Springer Publishing, NY.*

“People do not come in for diagnosis and treatment; they come to be made well, made whole, to recover the sense of health, of being well, fully alive, in-the-world...

The seven primary dimensions of patient centered care, summarized from thousands of focus groups of hospital patients and their families: “Respect for patients’ values, preferences, and expressed needs; Coordination and integration of care; Information, communication, and education; Physical comfort; Emotional support and alleviation of fear and anxiety; Involvement of family and friends; Transition and community.” *Gerteis et. al. Through the Patient’s Eyes: Understanding and Promoting Patient-Centered Care. Jossey-Bass Publishers, San Francisco, 1993.*

"It is even possible - in fact, necessary - for care providers to love those under their care without losing their professionalism.. What is all too common (in health care settings) is a certain atmosphere of coldness, of emotional neglect, which results from the inability or unwillingness of staff to interact with patients on the level of a shared humanity." *Charles*

Gourgey, Music Therapist (1999). Spiritual Encounters in Health Care and Human Service. Journal of Religion, Disability and Health, Haworth Press

"Despite religious differences among people, there seems to be a common influence of the 'transcendent' dimension of life. The 'heart' is the affective dynamic center of the individual, having the most enduring and decisive effects on the form of one's life." *Adrian van Kaam, a developmental psychologist who worked with refugees after WWII. Formation of the Human Heart. (1991). Crossroad Press*

"I find that we cannot grow spiritually if we ignore our humanness, just as we cannot become fully human if we ignore our spirituality...Each human being, however small or weak, has something to bring to humanity... As we start to really get to know others, as we begin to listen to each other's stories, things begin to change. We no longer judge each other according to concepts of power and knowledge or according to group identity, but according to these personal, heart-to-heart encounters. We begin the movement from exclusion to inclusion, from fear to trust, from closedness to openness, from judgement and prejudice to forgiveness and understanding. It is a movement of the heart." *Jean Vanier, founder of L'Arche, a community where persons with disabilities share their lives with assistants in the spirit of the beatitudes (1998) Becoming Human. Anansi Press.*

"Spirituality is a quality that belongs exclusively to the human animal...it's the life energy, the restlessness, that calls us beyond "self" to concern for, and relationships with, others and to a relationship with the mysterious "other." Spirituality is our ability to stand outside of ourselves and consider the meaning of our actions, the complexity of our motives and the impact we have on the world around us. It is our capacity to experience passion for a cause, compassion for others and forgiveness of self. Spirituality is a process of becoming, not an achievement; a potential rather than a possession..." *F.A. Prezioso, (1987). "Spirituality in the Recovery Process," Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment, Vol. 4.*

"Among people recovering from substance abuse, higher levels of religious faith and spirituality are associated with positive mental health, which may help contribute to the recovery process. Religious faith and spirituality are associated with increased coping, greater resilience to stress, an optimistic life orientation, greater perceived social support, and lower levels of anxiety." *Dustin Pardini, Univ. of Alabama, and Thomas Plante, Santa Clara University.*

"The idea of a 'soulful' relationship is not a sentimental one, nor is it easy to put into practice. The courage required to open one's soul to express itself or to receive another is infinitely more demanding than the effort we put into avoidance of intimacy. The stretching of the soul is like the painful opening of the body in birth. It is so painful in the doing that we often will attempt to avoid it, even though such opening is ultimately full of pleasure and reward. Johann Huizinga ...defines the human as essentially a being who plays... We find pleasure in the drama of our actions, in the stories we are living out through the events of serious life... The soul loves the imaginal level, which may take the form of poetics, dream, or play...Soul is a generator of life, spilling imagination into a world

that tries to keep itself stable and secure." *Thomas Moore. (1994). Soulmates: Honoring the Mysteries of Love and Relationship.*

"The human spirit is more powerful than drugs, and that's what needs to be nourished." *Oliver Sachs, Awakenings, (after the drugs failed to maintain patients' level of consciousness.)*

"For years I have listened to people during a critical stage of despair, a stage where they have felt life no longer had a meaning and they've been tempted to just end it all. At that point in someone's life, there's no point in trying to hand over some package and say, 'Here, believe this' or 'Think this' or 'Do that.' Nobody else's package matters at that instant. And because I don't have a package to sell, what I've offered has been my own companionship in those moments when someone is trying to tolerate NO meaning or to tolerate life not seeming to be worth the trouble...Sometimes the most valuable thing you can offer is not an answer but your presence, your being there to share the feeling of loneliness, your being there while someone goes on breathing in and out, whether it matters or not...I have come to a sort of conclusion that the answer, if there is one, is tied up with human compassion. That's it. We are here to be there for someone else." *Sally Casper, Child Abuse Counselor.*

"This has come to be for me the heart and essence of Christianity: 'I have called you to live out your lives in the 'presence' of one another, and I pledge Myself to live out My life in your presence.' Not only is this all the theology I know; it is all the theology there is, period." *Dick Westley, Theologian, University of Chicago from his book Theology of Presence, (1988).*

WHEN CHAOS ENTERS OUR LIVES, WHAT LESSONS CAN BE LEARNED? LET'S LOOK AT THE TOPIC OF SUFFERING

"Whenever our mind is completely open and we are not trying to control what we are exposed to, the body and mind can sit still in the heart of all suffering beings. That is all we have to do. Everything else will take care of itself... Suffering is the stream of our lives, and it is an illusion. Walk back up the stream to the source and you will be grateful because the suffering showed you the way. When you arrive, you might ask, 'what is the point of compassion? But there is not point to compassion. It just naturally arises. If you're alive, it naturally comes forth..." *Tenshin Reb Anderson Roshi, Buddhist philosopher*

"It is not by closing your eyes that you see your own nature. On the contrary, you must open your eyes wide and wake up to the real situation in the world to see completely your whole Dharma Treasure, your whole Dharma body. the bombs, the hunger, the pursuit of wealth and power - these are not separate from your nature...You will suffer, but your pain will not come from your own worries and fears. You will suffer because of your kinship with all beings, because you have the compassion of an awakened one, a Bodhisattva." *Tich Nahy Hanh, Buddhist philosopher*

NEW SCIENCE SEEKS TO REUNITE THE DIVISIONS THAT HAVE EXISTED

BETWEEN SCIENCE AND SPIRITUALITY
LET'S LOOK AT NEW SCIENCE'S CONTRIBUTION TO A PHILOSOPHY OF CARE

“At one time or another, we’ve all felt our lives were out of control and heading towards chaos. For us, science has striking news. Our lives are already in chaos - and not just occasionally, but all of the time. What’s more, the new science suggests, an individual and collective understanding of chaos may dramatically change our lives... Chaos science focuses on hidden patterns, nuances, the “sensitivity” of things, and the “rules” for how the unpredictable leads to the new...Chaos, it turns out, is as much about what we *can’t* know as it is about certainty and fact. It’s about letting go, accepting limits, and celebrating magic and mystery.”*The above quotes come from “The Seven Life Lessons of Chaos: Spiritual Wisdom from the Science of Change” by John Briggs and David Peat, Harper Collins, 1999*

**MY CONCLUSION IS THAT TR HAS A RESPONSIBILITY TO STAY
TRUE TO ITS ROOTS AND TO OFFER A SOUND PHILOSOPHY OF SELF-CARE**

“Holy full circle! We’ve come all the way back to leisure. I don’t have an attitude of arrogance towards those who used the medical/scientific model to dismiss leisure or to pry the field of therapeutic recreation away from its core foundation. My feeling is more a sense of sadness that we can’t seem to agree on the unique contribution that TR could make in bringing both camps together. My hope is that those who believe that science is the essential discipline will see that new science principles actually defend therapeutic recreation as a humanistic, existential, spiritual experience full of meaning and critical to those we serve. The chaos so inherent in human life generates creativity needed to address suffering effectively on the personal level. According to Briggs and Peat, chaos suggests that homeostasis, or the tendency of the body to return to a balanced state may be an illusion. Life gives us uncertainties; we should embrace them. Therapeutic recreation can contribute to a personal philosophy that can. The problem with the medical model is that it reduces people to a collection of problems that need to be fixed. It attempts through medication and therapy to restore control over disease, illness, and disability. To some extent that may be possible and desirable. But to emphasize functional outcomes as the primary goal of the field is unbalanced and unwise. Instead, the purpose of our work should be to assist people in the discovery of their truest selves, the development of a personal philosophy that values leisure, and the expression of a meaningful life. That extends beyond the functional - it’s holistic and true to both science and spirituality.”*Cathy O’Keefe*

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