

A REVOLUTION IN AWARENESS

Part 1

Roy Street interviews RICHARD HARVEY on the recently launched Sacred Attention Therapy (SAT) Online Training Course. SAT training represents an entirely new kind of psycho-spiritual paradigm for therapists and counselors, people who want to train to become counselors, and serious students of inner work

Roy: The SAT course seems to be revolutionary... what makes it special, so different and indeed unique?

Richard: Well, I would like to say first of all that the SAT online training is a massive undertaking by myself and Robert Meagher to bring into being a progressive psycho-spiritual training for personal and spiritual development and also for therapists and counselors to train in an effective method for transcending the personality attachments and stabilizing in authenticity. It is therefore a training that goes beyond what most people have experienced as counseling or psychotherapy and it also encompasses my learning of the last nearly 40 years - it is my way of passing on what I know so that real change can come about.

The scope of the first level alone is awesome. How long has it taken for you to put this together?

I think that Robert and I were putting in a solid seven months of work on this... I mean every waking hour, for me at least, when I wasn't working, I was working on this! The first level traces the process of inner development through to fairly advanced stages of work on personality and character... and most importantly gives the key elements to genuine emancipation from psychological bondage.

And what are these key elements?

Ask the right questions, do the work, follow it right the way through, do not be content with half measures, fulfil your innate capacity and potential... in short, be the conscious presence you really are.

Did you ever have any doubts about the course being online, because you usually offer training in person, don't you?

Yes, I did. But people asked over the last few years -- people from around the world -- would you offer a training course online. It was rather like telephone and Skype sessions for me. I hadn't thought about them until I was asked and when I tried them I was surprised how effective they were. As we have worked with creating the SAT online training I think I have felt increasingly how valid it is and how powerful as a training for self and working with others. We will have to see. I am sure we will be tweaking it here and there as our experience of interacting with the students unfolds. But for now I would say I am more excited and committed to this project of online training than ever.

What does the course cover?

There are twelve modules. Each module comprises three or four audio-visual lectures, a supporting document, and a PowerPoint summary of the lecture points. The first module is an introduction to SAT. I talk about being, the question of how the practitioner can ensure that their own issues do not interfere with healing, attention, and existence. I make the point that personal therapy can be completed, which is a position unique to SAT. We ask what are the unconscious reasons for coming to therapy and the crucial question: why do I want to be a therapist?

Why is that such a crucial question?

Therapists, counselors and healing practitioners of all kinds will bring their personal agendas based on their unresolved life experiences into their sessions with others. You cannot clearly witness another while the veil of your own hopes and desires is hanging in front of you. You won't be able to see clearly. In psychotherapy, in particular, clarity of sight is crucial and living out your aspirations through another is, needless to say, abhorrent. So right at the beginning in the SAT training we ask the question why do you want to be a therapist? and it may take the counselor-in-training months or even years to penetrate through the different levels of insight to the complete answer.

Don't therapists have to confront this in their work on themselves, in their own therapy?

Well, you would think so and whether the trainings are lax on this point or whether the student and later therapist simply never takes the question the whole way, the fact is that, in my experience, this question is not treated with enough seriousness.

We go on in module one to consider the SAT lineage; then we move on to desire, emotions, and forgiveness.

What is the importance of forgiveness in SAT?

Well, forgiveness has a very important place in the process of self-discovery, the relieving of the past conditioning, and the relinquishing of personality baggage. In spiritual practice, or *sadhana*, it has a rather different significance, but in personal work its place and position is precise. The completion of the seven stages of forgiveness is the penultimate stage in release from personality attachments. Forgiving as a process runs through a person's individual work on themselves from beginning to end, but immediately prior to the annulment of the shadow and the embracing of oneself in wholeness, the permutations of forgiveness must be entirely discarded -- fulfilled and let go of.

Toward the end of module one we look at the role of psychotherapy in the predicament of present day humanity, love, and the need for a new word for psychotherapy...

... because... ?

Because this old one word-- psychotherapy -- has become synonymous with pathology, cure, and the "expert approach." In modern dialogue psychotherapy continues to be equated with psychoanalysis. Lately of course cognitive behavioral therapy has begun to fudge the issue, but somewhere in there among the analytical and behaviorist schools, humanistic and

transpersonal psychologies have become partially occluded. The immense significance of this includes the fact that in humanistic psychology we had the beginnings of a psychology of well-being which was entirely at odds with the illness/disorder model of the analytical schools. In the 1980s a revolution in awareness seemed likely as humanistic psychology spread rapidly via, for example, the Human Potential Movement. However by the 1990s the forces of conformism and conservatism chastised the unruly infant and sent him back into the corner.

Part 2 of "A Revolution in Awareness" goes on to discuss further modules in the Sacred Attention Therapy (SAT) Online Training Course.

For full details of the course see <http://www.sacredattentiontherapy.com/SAT-Online-Training.html>

For the original version of this article see <http://www.therapyandspirituality.com/about-richard-harvey.html>