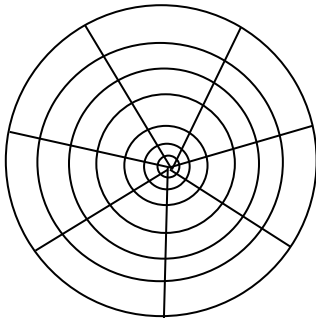


# PSYCHE EDUCATION

*Psyche Education is a core function of the DuVersity Working Group methodology.*

**Anthony Blake**

## The Principles



Psyche education is to enable the management of experience, without over regard for any particular view of psychology. It draws on the insight that any kind of adaptive or developmental movement of a 'self-steering' or autonomous system depends on *adequate variety*. This means that it is insufficient to administer this education through just one kind of method, such as: one kind of experience, activity, channel, set of impressions, etc. By way of example, it should include: both the conscious and the unconscious, however these are understood; it should include all three dimensions of function, being and will; the four aspects Jung called sensation, feeling, thinking and intuition, or accommodate to virtually any system. There is a fundamental principle

of diversity and difference, as illustrated in the metaphor of the spectrum of visible light.

The process of this education itself needs to be diverse. Thus it includes both strict control and emergence form the formless; it is both individual and collective, it is verbal and non-verbal, and so on.

Psyche education awakens an encounter and dialogue of the person with herself but not predicated on any view of what this 'self' might be. This encounter and dialogue is extended into relations with others and even with the world. Thus, there is another important principle of dialogue, exchange, movement and participation, one expression of which is called *participative consciousness* with observation as its consequence and not its driver.

A third principle emerges of having discovery over learning, the idea that what comes out of this education is unexpected and unique to each person, not following a teaching, model or single paradigm. If we do not know in advance what the psyche is, or what it means, then how can we proceed? Any standard method of 'self-development' presupposes what the goal or benefit is, which then preconditions what can happen. How can we enable a process that can allow for any kind of act of self-realization, that can permit any system of beliefs, or accommodate any theory of human existence?

No single way can meet such requirements. However, examination of our lives points to the possible answer: most of us take up various practices, associate with various communities, journey to different places, taste of different cultures, have various employments, and so on. We can suppose that all this is an instinctive search for psyche education, for self-discovery in the deeper sense of understanding the human experience.

If this is true, then we return to the principle of adequate variety. Any psyche education worth the name must be a combination of several methods, each stimulating a different kind of experience, each with its own 'logic' or viewpoint, such that the approach and results of the one can become

material or resource for another, each feeding into and being fed by the others, in a mutually correcting and supporting mosaic. If no one method is made dominant, all can co-operate.

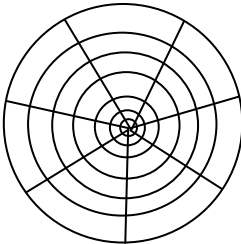

The psyche education we have distilled is like a woven fabric, each strand interwoven with the others. It is a fabric of many colors of subtle texture. Most importantly, it allows individuals to weave themselves through it, because it is a fabric in process of being woven.

## The Approach of Integration

*Psyche* is meant as an inclusive term, rather than to adopt a narrow definition. Psyche includes the bodily life and participation in community. It includes perception of the world, including the wonder of the cosmos. It is material and immaterial, biological and cultural, genetic and spiritual. It includes language, science, metaphor, history, myth, etc. Awareness and recognition of this inclusivity is an essential part of psyche education.

There are practical and ethical limits on what we can compress within a few days on a programme. It is too complex a challenge to include explorations of eating and sex, travel and cultural exchange, changes of profession or undertaking long-term enterprises or adventures. The individual has to make such explorations for herself. Psyche education is a seeding process, aimed at initiating a

process that can go by itself. This is to discover 'incessant learning' in which discovery continues in life willy-nilly. Psyche education is to initiate a process and not to bring it to stop by arriving at 'the answer'. The facilitators who service psyche education are neither authorities nor leaders in the usual sense. Their job is to run the methods as impartially as possible, because these

<p><b>EXPERIENTING</b></p> <p>Active exploration of the stuff of experience while sitting still</p>	<p><b>TISSUE COLLAGE</b></p> <p>Eliciting active imagination through making tissue paper collages</p>	<p><b>I L M</b></p> <p>Moving in the medium of the meaning carried by music</p>
<p><b>SOCIAL DREAMING</b> Exploring the meaning of our world through a matrix of dreams</p>		<p><b>MEDIAN GROUP</b></p> <p>Free floating dialogue transforming hate into fellowship</p>
<p><b>MOVEMENTS</b></p> <p>Activity of the body as a way of understanding</p>		<p><b>LOGOVISUAL</b></p> <p>Articulation of knowledge and experience to reveal patterns of significance</p>

are to act as neutral frameworks within which people can work. Each of them provides a way of 'containment' without which nothing can build. The individual, the group and the method form a

relationship and the 'purity' of the method is essential. Each of the methods or frameworks used derives from substantial research and experience over very many years. Each, taken in its own right, can lead over time to the most profound results, including creations of great beauty and meaning. Such advanced pursuits are left to the decisions of individuals, but the depth and potential of the methods is of supreme importance, because their use is to respect the corresponding in the individuals involved in psyche education. It would not be appropriate to use methods that are simply slick and shallow. Beauty and intelligence for example, are considered as of supreme utility. There is no one core method in the mosaic of several methods. Each is the starting point and each a culmination. The ancient symbol shown on the previous page represents the way it is most elegantly. Every method is a 'way into the centre'.

The concentric rings are symbolic of the depth of experience. In the process of psyche education, at any moment, for a particular individual, experience of one method can give access to the center, where all methods converge into the same understanding of reality.

That there are seven methods is both pragmatic and symbolic. Seven is about the number of elements we can entertain at the same time. It is also embedded in our culture from ancient times in such things as the days of the week or the colors of the spectrum. Every one of the seven methods requires *participation* to understand it. It is rather like the difference between looking at a picture of cake and eating it.

### **The Matrix of Methods**

Each of the seven provides a 'template' for understanding the others. Hence the whole process is one based on *contemplation*, the word meaning 'putting templates together'. There is no point of reference outside the experience in process. In the matrix shown on the previous page, in which the seven methods are briefly described, we have an eight possibility represented by an image of Psyche and Eros. It allows for future developments, which might, for example, include theatre. This would be the dynamic space in which we could dramatically reflect the whole process as a performance, incorporating our memories.

The pathway taken by discovery is also akin to a dance – with a partner that is all that is independent of us and yet part of us - the usually unseen, unthought, unknown of the universe or nature or the spiritual. The partner is the source of inspiration, it is the material of our work, and it is all things that come of themselves in their own way to dance with us. The prevalent image of people as separate entities, existing in an indifferent objective reality is misguided. The subjective and the objective speak to each other, change roles, spin round each other and intertwine.

The unseen partner can be taken as our teacher, or our God, the unconscious or any number of things. We cannot operate alone. The education of the psyche is a dance, not a solitary movement down a path towards a prefigured destination. Individuals participating in psyche education dance inside themselves, with each other, in the medium of each method, with beauty and skill. The two 'partners' circle each other, to rise to another level.

We cannot be aware of the whole reality. We need this partner, whether pictured as divine or natural process, to help us participate meaningfully. The relative kind of self-centred consciousness we have needs help.

All that we need is at hand and we swim in every moment in a plenum of meaning. The object of psyche education is to *remember* that we came from this fullness of meaning, in the flow of creation – of universe, stars, planets, life, generations, cells, breath, etc. We can find ourselves isolated and feeling lost. To remember is to swim against the stream, to go against everything that seems to

dictate how things are or how they should be. How to climb the flow of creation? This is impossible unless we take the helping hand of our unseen partner and join the dance.

The unseen partner is there everywhere there is meaning – in every art, in every culture, in every science, in history, the stars, nature, our bodies, the food we eat – and all we have to do is to become aware of it.

Everyone knows the saying “It takes two to tango” but few the saying “It takes three to change”. There are many levels of dance. We are used to thinking in terms of human characters and agencies and have forgotten the old wisdom of the spirits of nature and the immanence of the stars. What we ordinarily think of as simply a backdrop to our activities is like an ocean of possibilities. To become a participant in reality is not to lose oneself but to awaken to a vast companionship.