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Integrity: An Important Aspect in Wholistic Healing and in Life

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Abstract

In this editorial I consider the issue of integrity through lessons learned from Energy Psychology (EP), particularly the modality I developed and practice, called WHEE, the Wholistic Hybrid derived from EMDR and EFT. My discussion is framed within the wholistic model of care, addressing body, emotions, mind, relationships and spirit. Each of the wholistic components is inextricably intertwined and inseparable from the others. Impaired integrity may be identified and corrected. It is also possible to build and deepen integrity. This discussion will focus both on personal issues of integrity and on clinicians' integrity and capacity to model integrity for clients.

Key words: Integrity, personal integrity, clinician integrity, Energy Psychology, EP, WHEE, wholistic

Background

All concepts setting boundaries to what we term the self are arbitrary. In the systems view, we consist of and are sustained by interweaving currents of matter, energy, and information that flow through us, interconnecting us with our environment and other beings.

Yet, we are accustomed to identifying ourselves only with that small arc of the flow-through that is lit, like the narrow beam of a flashlight, by our individual subjective awareness.

But we don't have to so limit our self-perceptions... It is as plausible to align our identity with the larger pattern, interexistent with all beings, as to break off one segment of the process and build our borders there.

- Joanna Macy

I invite you to consider the issue of integrity through lessons learned from Energy Psychology (EP). EP is a group of methods for clearing psychological and physical problems. In EP you focus on your thoughts and emotions, recite affirmations to neutralize negativity, and tap on various points on your body (ACEP, web reference). The EP modality I developed and practice is called WHEE, the Wholistic Hybrid derived from EMDR and EFT (Benor, Web reference 1). WHEE is a self-healing method that can help you to release physical and psychological pains, stress and distress rapidly and

deeply. WHEE also enables you to install positive thoughts and feelings to enhance your life (Benor, 2008; 2009). WHEE is most effective when utilized within wholistic frameworks (Benor, 2004). Like other psychotherapy approaches, as well as many complementary/alternative therapies that may help in similar manners,.

Wholistic awareness and therapies engage and address body, emotions, mind, relationships and spirit (Benor, Web reference 2). Problematic issues in any or all of these layers of your being can be addressed rapidly and deeply through WHEE. I will briefly discuss each of the wholistic components separately, but in reality they are complex, inextricably intertwined and inseparable from each other.

I have been exploring and pondering the complexities of wholistic awareness and healing for many years. I have considered many of the complexities and challenges of integrating all of these levels of my being. I have been discussing these with the people who come to me for help and with my EP colleagues and other therapists and friends. There are many conflicts that arise between the wholistic levels of awareness and beingness within ourselves, and in decisions we make about interactions with other people and with the world at large. Often, these contradictions provide deep lessons about our integrity.

Integrity is defined (dictionary.com) as

1. adherence to moral and ethical principles; soundness of moral character; honesty.
2. the state of being whole, entire, or undiminished: to preserve the integrity of the empire.
3. a sound, unimpaired, or perfect condition: the integrity of a ship's hull.

The first definition, the adherence to moral and ethical principles, is commonly the primary focus when we discuss integrity. Most often, this is applied in discussions of individual honesty and probity.

In this discussion we will expand our consideration of integrity to include the second definition as a metaphoric identification of the integrity of your whole Self. We will explore how your personal integrity may be influenced and expressed through every level of your being, including your body, emotions, mind, relationships (with other people and the environment) and spirit. I call this a wholistic perspective.¹ I use a capitalized 'Self' when I address all of these levels as an integrated unity.

The third definition is also helpful in a metaphoric as well as literal sense, pointing on the one hand to the many possible ways in which your wholistic integrity may be whole and sound; and on the other hand to many ways in which your integrity may be hindered or impaired. And this leads to the most important focus of my discussion.

You may be surprised to learn that it is possible to build and deepen your integrity, and to deal with factors that put you in a place of impaired integrity relative to a possibly better state of integrity that you can achieve. WHEE, other EP and related modalities readily enable you to reduce and eliminate issues in your life that diminish your integrity. They also provide tools to install and build up factors that enhance your integrity. WHEE and other EP modalities help you cultivate your awareness of lack of integrity and to attend to your whole being in ways that are subtle, yet with profound changes in you and in your relationships with others and your environment.

For the purposes of this discussion I define integrity as a state of harmony in an individual or group of people in which they are free to pursue their lives in manners that enable them to maximize their health, satisfaction and happiness. Personal integrity includes being in integrity with other living beings, the environment and spiritual levels of existence.

This discussion will focus both on personal issues of integrity and on clinicians' integrity and capacity to model integrity for clients.

Wholistic approaches to understanding and deepening integrity

Body

It is no use walking anywhere to preach unless our walking is our preaching.
- St Francis of Assisi

When you treat your body well, maintaining a healthy diet and fitness, you create a solid, supportive platform for all the other levels of your being – as they are expressed through your body's journeys through life. This support is important for your energies as well as for your brain and nervous system; your skeleton, muscles and joints; and all of your other tissues and organs.

Western science and medicine focus almost exclusively on these physical aspects of the body. But we are more than just our physical selves. It is acknowledged in quantum physics that matter and energy are inter-convertible. Few scientists would dispute that the screen or printed page on which you read this editorial could be described as molecules and subatomic particles or as energies, rather than as physical matter. Sadly, modern medicine has been slow to acknowledge that your physical body can equally well be described as energies (Brennan, 1988).

Energy Psychology and many other complementary/ alternative medicine modalities have well-established ways of engaging the biological energy (bioenergy) body for assessments and treatments (Benor, 2004; Gerber, 1988). The energy body also provides a platform for supporting your integrity.

Your physical and bioenergy bodies are shaped by your personality and your life experiences. When you live in integrity, they will reflect your states of physical, mental, emotional, relational and spiritual health. When any of these aspects of being are under stress, your nervous system and muscles will respond with tensions. Stress hormones will be secreted, increasing physical states of tension and blood pressure. Psychological states of tension and trauma patterns may be triggered, which in turn may worsen the physical tensions. Your bioenergy body may become agitated. Thus, when physical integrity is compromised, the integrity of your whole being may be compromised.

Bioenergetic integrity also involves clearing the biological energy body of trauma residues and other disharmonies that may throw you out of balance – from current stresses or traumas in this or in past lives.

Pains and other symptoms or even physical illnesses may arise to alert you of the stresses and disharmonies that have pushed you out of integrity. You can respond with integrity by listening to what your body wants to tell you about your life, and then make the appropriate changes to restore the integrity of your whole being.

'Toni' (composite example) had severe menstrual pains. These had been unresponsive to varieties of medical treatments over a two-year period. Engaging in an inner dialogue with her pains, she opened memories that had been buried for fourteen years, from the time of a date rape in her early twenties. Clearing the trauma residues with WHEE eliminated the painful memories and feelings, and with them also the physical pains.

In addition, Toni had found it difficult to allow herself to be close to any man, despite the fact that she was vivacious and sociable. Encouraged by her success in alleviating her pains, Toni expanded her uses of WHEE to install positive expectations about relationships with men.

Toni's mental and emotional integrity had been altered by her trauma, which was far more than just a physical, sexual assault. Her shock, fear, emotional and physical pains, rage and resultant post-traumatic stress had altered her integrity on many levels of her being. She carried not only the painful memories and emotions, but also anxieties and fears about trusting herself to be close to any man. This could be considered a state of integrity that incorporated new beliefs about being unsafe in the world in view of her traumatic experiences. It could also be considered a state of impaired integrity in the context of her compromised earlier state of integrity, prior to her trauma. What is clear is that after Toni used WHEE, she was in a place of greater physical, mental and emotional integrity and much happier in her life.

In summary: Body integrity involves proper nurturing of your physical body and listening to the messages your body gives you. You may also address issues of body disharmonies and imbalances in other levels of your being through bioenergy clearings and strengthening of your energy body. Various therapeutic approaches can facilitate clarification and clearing of body symptoms and illnesses. These may involve physical interventions such as diet and bodywork therapies, as well as bioenergy therapies.

Emotions

Be who you are and say what you feel 'cause people who mind don't matter, and people who matter don't mind.

- Theodor Suess Geisel

When you express your emotions, positive and negative, you are able to interact with other people, maintaining your sense of who you are and what you are feeling. In this arena of your life, however, you must also be considerate in how you express your feelings – taking care to respect other people's sensitivities so that you do not hurt them. Maintaining your own integrity can be a challenge in such situations, as you would also not want to suppress your own feelings to avoid conflict or guard others' emotions.

If you are blocked in expressing your emotions (by others' intolerance of your emotions and/or by your insecurities and inhibitions in expressing them freely), you build up tensions in all levels of your being. You may also come to feel diminished in their eyes and in your own sense of who you are. You may find yourself in a state of diminished or impaired self-image and out of integrity.

Emotional traumas may leave residues of hurt, anger, fear and other feelings. These are often buried outside your conscious mind, as your unconscious will do its best to protect you from feeling the painful feelings. With such buried traumas, you may find yourself out of integrity and unable to participate in certain activities; to commit to full relationships; or to live your life to its fullest extent in other ways.

'Gail' was a sensitive, caring person who appeared entirely appropriate to study for a career in counseling. Problems arose, however, in her clinical supervision sessions. She avoided delving into clients' issues involving anger, and became uncharacteristically irritable when her supervisor questioned her about this. Her supervisors strongly recommended to Gail that she should seek a therapist for herself, and after a period of working in therapy on her resistances, she came into memories of both of her parents having had violent tempers throughout her childhood. Clearing these trauma memories, Gail was then able to be in a space of greater integrity with her clients and with her supervisor when issues of anger were raised.

In this example, Gail achieved a better state of integrity after resolving her residual feelings from her earlier life traumas in her relationships with her parents. Gail was able to clear her current life problems by clearing her unconscious residues of earlier life traumas.

In summary: Emotional integrity requires that you respectfully give attention to your emotions, listening to what they are telling you about your life, and expressing them in ways that are considerate of your needs and of people with whom you interact. WHEE and other EP can help you release emotional patterns that block you from living in integrity, and to install emotional responses such as forgiveness, acceptance, caring and love of others, that promote greater acceptance, respect, love and integrity within yourself and in your interactions with others people and with all other consciousness.

Mind

Though one may conquer a thousand times a thousand men in battle, yet he indeed is the noblest victor who conquers himself.

- Buddha

Your mind guides you through the lessons learned in your life experiences, forming impressions of the people, relationships, environment and all other factors impacting your life. You come to see patterns of interactions between yourself and others and build up an inner memory bank of past experiences and likely outcomes in recurring, similar experiences. This helps you steer through life with mental maps that aid you in choosing healthy, life-supporting, positive and safe interactions on every level of your being.

Your mind may misguide you, however, if it has experienced traumas, large and small – particularly when the traumas feel overwhelming because you are either too young to fully understand them or at any age when they are so severe that you haven't the emotional or cognitive resources to cope with them.

- Children may feel rejected by parents who repeatedly say, "You're a bad child!" rather than explaining that they disapprove of what their child did. Such children may carry the belief that they are bad for the rest of their lives.
- Children may feel incompetent when the teacher or their classmates laugh at what they say in class. For the rest of their lives they may carry away the message that it's foolish or dangerous to speak out in public.
- Children often grow up lacking guidance and help to arrive at nonjudgmental realignment when erring or when witnessing adult behaviors when they are out of integrity.
- After experiencing an auto accident – either actively, in a collision of the car you were driving in or by observing someone else's accident – your emotions may go into panic mode and your mind may come away with the lesson, "It's dangerous to drive or ride in a car." This is how people end up with post-traumatic fears and phobias.

The memories of such traumatic experiences and their emotional impacts may lead you to create distorted mental maps in your unconscious mind for navigating through life. These maps may be helpful in avoiding further trauma. On the other hand, they may lead you to be overly-sensitive to cues that do not actually signal impending danger, yet still trigger stress or panic responses. This is a serious breach of integrity.

'Joe' had twice fallen in love but had backed out of these relationships when the issue of having children was raised. He couldn't understand why this was such an issue for him, and this is what brought him to therapy. A careful history elicited the report of his having worked as a volunteer fireman for several years. He stopped this work after he witnessed a child burn to death in a fire, more than a decade prior to starting therapy. While this was grossly obvious to

the therapist as a strong hint regarding Joe's reluctance to have children, Joe himself had not made this connection. WHEE enabled Joe to release his trauma memories, and he was then willing to have children of his own.

Joe's traumatic experience in witnessing the death of a child threw him out of integrity in his personal life. It became clear that he had not allowed himself to feel the depth of his grief over the child's death. He had suffered great guilt and self-blame for having been unable to save the child. Joe had been unable to process this trauma and move on with his life in a normal fashion.

This is a very common experience when memories of physical and emotional traumas are buried in the unconscious mind and then lead people to avoid various behaviors that could release the memories. It is very common, for instance, for women who have been sexually abused to avoid all close relationships with men because their unconscious residues of inner traumas ring alarm bells whenever they start getting close with any man. In all of the above examples this sort of problems had been evident. Toni, Gail and Joe had lost their integrity due to the unconscious memory residues of traumatic experiences in their lives.

Enhancing your integrity can be lifesaving. Your mind and emotions may create situations in which your body develops serious illnesses. Some people with cancers and other incurable diseases have recovered unexpectedly when they resolved challenging issues in their lives that had pushed them out of integrity. Common situations leading people to develop fatal illnesses included being in jobs which they feel are intolerable but also feel they cannot leave due to loss of income; being in relationships they find intolerable but cannot leave because of children, illness in the partner or social and religious pressures; or when they are depressed but cannot acknowledge or deal with it in healing ways. Numbers of books have been written about remarkable recoveries from such medically incurable illnesses, which may occur through personal growth, psychotherapy, prayer, visiting shrines, and without apparent explanations (Hirshberg and Barasch, 1995; Hirschberg and O'Regan, 1993; LeShan, 1977; 1989).

Over and over we took note of a certain quality that we came to call 'congruence' – an impression that these people, in the midst of crisis, had discovered a way to be deeply true to themselves, manifesting a set of behaviors growing from the roots of their being.

- Caryl Hirshberg and Marc Ian Barasch

Your mind may also be misguided by your family, school or societal teachings about how to best live in this world. Many cultures teach that their culture has the only true explanations for how the world was created and how best to live a moral and ethical life. Most of these teachings include injunctions against accepting outside views and teachings. Living in integrity within such a culture often places people out of integrity with the rest of humanity. A serious case in point is the Western assumption that personal, family and national accumulations of wealth – at the expense of other humans and other beings on our planet – is justifiable. This appears likely to cause the sixth major extinction on our planet, which seems well on its way and could occur as early as in the next hundred years, and possibly earlier (Jamail, 2014). So far, humanity has been challenged to overcome the behaviors of selfish people, and is seriously out of integrity in these regards.

Further such conflicts or breaches of integrity are common in the religious and cultural beliefs that humans have been granted dominion over all of the living beings on earth, as well as over the earth, waters and air. There is an assumption here that only humans have a level of consciousness that can perceive, understand and evaluate complex ecological and global issues. This is a breach of integrity in terms of human relationships with the environment, addressed in greater detail below. There is evidence that many such interpretations of scripture are out of integrity with the original writings. Monotheistic scripture originally referred to humans as the caretakers of the Garden, responsible to

the earth's integrity as a mirror to humans' own integrity: "*Then the LORD God placed the man in the Garden of Eden to cultivate it and guard it" ... "to tend and care for it"* (The Living Bible).

In summary: Mind can guide you to live in integrity, adhering to ethical and moral principles and to experience a sense of wholeness in relationship with self and others without regrets or unresolved past traumas. Mind may also misguide you to define your principles in selfish ways that are unethical within a broader context. WHEE and other EP provide methods for changing your limiting beliefs and releasing traumas that hinder you from pursuing an ethical and moral life in the broadest sense. WHEE also helps you install positive thoughts, beliefs and intentions, and to enhance awarenesses, acceptance and caring for others.

Relationships with other people

You are in integrity when the life you are living on the outside matches who you are on the inside.

- Alan Cohen

It is through healthy relationships with your family, friends, colleagues and others with whom you interact that you most commonly become aware of moral and ethical questions relating to your integrity. In your supportive relationships you find diverse mirrors that reflect back to you who and how you are with other people, which helps you to appreciate more deeply and clearly who you are within yourself. This enhanced clarity leads you to achieve a greater integrity because sometimes you don't project what you intend to express. In addition, sometimes what you express and how people respond to you reveals aspects of yourself you were not aware of.

In your relationships you also come up against varieties of questions you and others are addressing, and the choices you and others are making, in determining your personal definitions and boundaries for integrity. While the most basic guideline for integrity in relating with others is to treat others as you would like to be treated yourself, there can still be a broad and contradictory range of possible ways to treat others.

Most commonly, people develop their sense of integrity through adherence to the social norms of their community of birth or of choice, You may feel yourself to be in integrity when you behave in ways that are congruent with those in your community, religious group, workplace or nation. This may give you a sense of being in personal integrity, even though outsiders to your group may feel otherwise.

Here are some common challenges in choices for being in integrity:

- You can elect to put your needs and preferences first, or to be altruistic and work to help others, such as family members or to serve the common good of all.
- You may belong to a group whose rules for integrity differ from your personal rules, pressuring you to buy into their ethical beliefs and abandon your own.
- You may come from a Western culture where individualism is highly valued, or from an Eastern culture where the individual serves the needs of the family first and personal needs second.
- You may be a capitalist who values the personal gains you earn for yourself (and possibly your employer, family or socio-economic group, or nation), or a socialist who sees your personal highest good served best when you serve the highest good of all.
- You may come to a situation from a place of your personal history of trauma, which leads you to respond from hurt, anger, fear, grief and other unresolved issues, or you may work on your trauma with WHEE or other therapies and then be able to come to the same situation from a place of compassion and understanding of the situations of others.

- You may see the good of humanity as being your primary concern on planet earth, or you may see the highest good served when you work for the good of all consciousness (including the earth, waters and air, and Gaia herself) as your primary concern.

So integrity is in large measure a matter of choice, based on personal and collective values. I believe that exploring your wholistic integrity can lead you to more deep and healing states of integrity.

It is common for people in various groups around the world to feel entitled to privileges for themselves that they deny to people whom they designate as 'others.' Worse yet, these self-proclaimed privileges may include the right or even duty to denigrate, exploit, disenfranchise, persecute and kill the 'others.' A few examples include:

- Europeans and their emigrants have felt entitled to take over the lands inhabited by natives of the Americas, killing many in the process of doing so. Their descendents continue to consider this acceptable.;
- Religious groups around the world have felt entitled, if not mandated by their religions to denigrate, persecute and slaughter people who do not adhere to their religion;
- Nazis have felt they are righteously purifying the human race by killing off Jews, Gypsies, homosexuals, the mentally retarded and others whom they considered to be contaminants to their own, self-declared, 'superior' group;
- Many corporations feel they are mandated to increase their business profits with no consideration for the impacts their actions will have on the public, their employees and the environment; and
- Many politicians feel they are entitled to exploit their positions for personal gains acquired through bribes and other favors received from people seeking their votes and appropriations, from illegal financial support in elections, and lucrative appointments upon retirement from their elected positions. At the same time they appear to have no qualms about betraying the trust inherent in their elections to positions in which they are expected to represent the needs of their constituents rather than their own wishes.

From the perspective of my own values for integrity, I believe the above constitute lower levels or even perversions of integrity because they include exploitations and abuses of 'others.' Sadly, the world is now seriously threatened by corporations, governments and societies that are out of integrity in these sorts of ways.

As darkness helps you to understand and appreciate light, so lack of wholistic integrity helps you to understand and value and work to be in ever-greater integrity. Lacks of wholistic integrity in others may be easier to identify than when we, ourselves, are out of integrity. Speaking and interacting with people who are in integrity can be enormously helpful to you in understanding and building your own integrity. Professional counseling and therapy are often enormously helpful in these regards, particularly when you explore your issues with a wholistic practitioner, and better yet, with a practitioner of high integrity. Acquiring wholistic awareness, you may also find it enormously helpful to practice WHEE or other wholistic self-healing methods on your own.

In the special arena of relationships between caregivers and careseekers there is a great need to be particularly sensitive to issues of integrity. While the good of the client is expected to be served first, there can be subtle and gross ways in which caregivers are self-serving. For instance, to be maximally effective, caregivers need to be centered and as free of biases as possible, in order to minimize distortions in their perceptions of and/or responses to their careseekers' issues. For example:

- Caregivers who insist that their views and beliefs are more valid than those of their clients are disrespecting their clients' integrity.
- Caregivers who satisfy their personal needs through sexual relations with clients are betraying the trust inherent in the therapeutic relationship.

- Caregivers who have unresolved issues of trauma, grief or other negative life experiences are prone to discouraging their clients from discussing these issues. This avoidance protects the caregivers from feeling their own distress, at the expense of the careseekers, who do not have the help they need to clear these issues. The example of Gail, above, illustrates this problem.
- Caregivers who promote their preferred methods of intervention over all others are discouraging clients from seeking and finding the fullest possible range of healing.
- Caregivers depend on careseekers for their livelihood and may keep the careseekers dependent and in need of caregivers' support and prescriptions. Psychoanalysis and Psychiatry are two examples of this, but other therapists are also guilty of such breaches of therapeutic integrity.

To become aware of, remedy and in the future to avoid these sorts of breaches of integrity, therapists need to ask themselves regularly about their levels of integrity. This process of reflection can be markedly enhanced through professional supervision of one's therapeutic work; peer supervision; continuing education; and self-education.

In Summary: Integrity in relationships with other people requires that you take into consideration, respect and honor the life experiences, beliefs, behaviors and needs of others as well as your own. Sorting out issues of interpersonal integrity is incredibly complex. This is the stuff that literature, song, drama and comedy are made of. The process of facing challenges in finding a place of integrity through your relationships can be a tremendous personal and spiritual growth experience.

*This above all: to thine own self be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.*
- William Shakespeare

Relationships with other living beings and the environment

The purpose of your Holy relationship with every other person, place, or thing is not to figure out what they want or need, but what you require or desire now in order to grow, in order to be Who you want to Be.

That is why I created Relationship to other things. If it weren't for this, you could have continued to live in a vacuum, a void, the Eternal Allness whence you came.

Yet in the Allness, you simply are and cannot experience your "awareness" as anything in particular because in the Allness there is nothing you are not.

So I devised a way for you to create anew, and Know, Who You Are in your experience.

...the greatest help you can give a person is to wake them up, to remind them of Who They Really Are.

- Neale Donald Walsch

Within the framework of being part of planet Earth, you are in integrity when you act in ways that consider the needs of other living beings and of our planet herself, along with your own needs. The precautionary principle is one of the best guidelines here:

When an activity raises threats of harm to human health or the environment, precautionary measures should be taken even if some cause and effect relationships are not fully established scientifically. In this context the proponent of an activity, rather than the public, should bear the burden of proof. The process of applying the precautionary principle must be

open, informed and democratic and must include potentially affected parties. It must also involve an examination of the full range of alternatives, including no action.

- Wingspread Statement on the Precautionary Principle (1998)

I recommend an even more stringent interpretation of the precautionary principle, to state that all of your actions, without exception, should be taken under this principle.

You might well ask, "How can you know the needs of every aspect of your world, in order to fully adhere to the precautionary principle?" In truth and integrity, there is no way to be absolutely certain you are in complete integrity in these regards. But you can ponder questions about integrity in a wholistic manner:

Body – using muscle testing (MT), that helps you access your intuition (Benor, 2002; 2014)

Emotions – sensing whether answers feel right and seeking/ accepting feedback from others with whom you compare your feelings about situations

Mind – examining the logical steps, procedures and known outcomes

Relationships – inviting other people as individuals, and the consciousness of all other beings and of your planet herself to participate in your deliberations

Spirit – asking your questions in meditation and/or prayer and accessing higher consciousness and the collective consciousness of all beings on this planet

Again citing the teachings of Joanna Macey:² In modern society we often suffer from "time sickness." We are stuck in today, not connected to the ancestors nor to visions of a more positive future. We then lack a temporality that can take us out of stresses from threats of ecological overwhelm and despair about the future.

WHEE and other EP can help you release the overwhelm that can push you into paralyzing despair, or worse yet, into avoidance of even examining or considering the lessons of the past about being out of integrity with one's environment (Diamond, 2005) and can help you clear fears of facing the threats to our survival in the near future.

In summary: First, do no harm – to any living being or to any aspect of our planet. Consider the impact of your actions upon your planet for all time to come – rather than just in the immediate future.

Spirit

Freedom is not being bound to a worldly perspective, but connecting with soul and the infinite and universal.

- Scott Walker

In spiritual awareness you will find some of the clearest examples of the challenges in drawing lines for decisions about integrity. Because it is difficult, if not impossible, to have consensual validation of personal spiritual perceptions, you cannot know that your perception is more valid or less than a differing perception reported by someone else. So you are challenged to ask ever-deepening questions about your integrity, and to explore the answers you get through as many and varied avenues as you can.

I've been exploring spiritual awareness for over thirty years, both personally and through extensive reading on personal reports and research.³ My understanding is that spirit is that part of your Self which incarnates aspects of your soul and serves as your continuous connection with your higher self and the All. Your soul is that part of you which includes your fullest essence. Your soul is the

container for your fullest consciousness of being. It remembers all of your lives and negotiates your future lives with the help of spirit guides, angels and the Infinite Source.

Your spirit is your link between your physical existence and your soul. Your spirit carries life purposes and lessons, which are expressed and learned through all of the levels of your being. Spirit and soul survive physical death, experience further learning between physical lives, and return to experience further lessons in other physical lives.

Spirit is commonly experienced as inspirations; awakenings to transcendent awarenesses that come through communing with nature, with spiritual teachers, and through personal meditation and prayer; through synchronicities – those wonderful 'coincidences' that hint to you of a transcendent choreography in your life; through challenges in your life that waken you to ask questions about the meanings of life, to ask for help, and to marvel at the miracles of healings that are given to you (Benor, 2006). My personal spiritual awarenesses have included all of these. I have also had an intuitive knowing of rightness and wrongness in my life since childhood, going way beyond sensory or reasoned grounds for what I have come to call 'gnowing.'

The spirit aspect of wholistic awareness is commonly experienced by many through their religious practices – though in Western society it is often taught in isolation from the other elements of wholistic awareness. Each religion can offer deep wisdom through its own insights and approaches to spirituality. The Infinite Source speaks all languages. Even within a single religion, each person will hear a personalized version of the Voice of the Infinite Source and will perceive the Infinite Source as a uniquely experienced Presence.

Spiritual awarenesses are often stimulated and enhanced through every level of our being.

Body – 'Peak' physical experiences may be stimulated by various physical activities (Murphy & White, 1995).

Emotions – Spiritual awarenesses may be stirred relationships, by observing and/or participating in the creative arts and through being in nature.

Mind – Opening to awareness of being one with a greater All that extends beyond our current physical existence may come through personal reading, education, religious and spiritual instruction; meditation of various sorts (which, paradoxically, may include quieting the chatting mind that distracts us from spiritual awarenesses).

Relationships – Your love of other people and of other people for you may stir your awareness of being loved by your higher self, your guides and angels, and the Infinite Source.

Spirit – Connecting with spirit spontaneously or intentionally awakens you to the spiritual essence that is alive within you. This may also occur as well when you connect with the broader essence of spirit that is inherent in every aspect of your existence, extending to include all other people, all other beings, all other aspects of our planet, and extending to include All That Is.

Your spiritual involvement supports life and participates in each and every aspect of your life – individually and collectively. It is through your spirit that you often come to appreciate the broader aspects of your Self – the totality and unity of your body, emotions, mind, relationships and spirit.

Acting with integrity through your spiritual Self requires a centeredness so that the voice of Spirit can be sensed more clearly, with as little distortion as possible. No single person or religion or spiritual practice can bring you to a complete understanding of All That Is. The wholeness of spiritual awareness can only be partially perceived by any individual person. Each of us is like a single pixel on a giant screen, contributing our personal participation to the collective spiritual consciousness. From that perspective, no one person can perceive the entirety of spiritual dimensions. Collective

explorations to connect with spiritual awarenesses add to the integrity of your understanding of the messages of Spirit because each of us peers through a different window into the realms of Spirit. It is often within our families of origin and families of choice – when we are fortunate to be close with those who are in a place of integrity (sadly, not a very common experience) – that we come to develop our own spiritual integrity.

‘Victor’ and his wife ‘Chris,’ in their mid-30’s, had left the Baptist Church and were struggling to clarify– as individuals and as parents to their pre-school son and daughter twins – what to teach them about spiritual aspects of life. Both parents had grown up in families that practiced their spiritual lives within harshly restrictive and exclusive definitions of religion, with far more negative teachings than Chris and Victor found comfortable. WHEE enabled them to release their spiritually and emotionally traumatic childhood experiences. They then felt more free to explore much more positive personal spiritual experiences with their children.

As humans, our perceptions and understandings of the Infinite Source are, for the most part, very limited. We in Western culture are rarely taught to connect directly with our inner spiritual awarenesses. We are taught what others have said and taught about spirituality. This has also gotten us used to relating to spirituality through our ideas about spirituality, rather than through how we directly experience and perceive our spirituality.

The life challenges you experience are often invitations to seek deeper meanings for what is transpiring in your life.

WHEE and other EP invite you to use the strongest positive statements you can come up with in the process of reducing negativity and enhancing positivity. When you state your problem, followed by a strong positive statement, the positive softens and lessens the intensity of the negative.

For example, in one of their steps in the transformative process of releasing religious negativity with WHEE, feeling they had fallen from grace and were not worthy of God’s love and their own self-love, Victor and Chris said:

Negative focus: “Even though I still cringe with resentment and anger at my parents for doing their best to scare me with threats of hellfire and damnation as motives for adhering to their religious beliefs...”

Positive statement: “I still love and accept myself, wholly and completely.”

Tapping on the left and right sides of the body enhanced the process of releasing negativity.

Chris experienced rapid, deep changes with this WHEE focus. Victor noted only modest decreases in his resentments with each round of this process. I then suggested adding to the positive statement, “And the Infinite Source loves and accepts me, wholly and completely and unconditionally.” Victor noted a distinctly greater gentling and healing effect of the process when he connected with the Infinite Source. He found this a powerful lesson in validating the power for change that can be engaged through his personal spiritual awareness. This is a common experience in the spiritual uses of WHEE.

You may also find yourself opening into several meta-positive spiritual awarenesses with these self-healing practices. A meta-awareness is an awareness about another awareness. The most common meta-positive is to grow increasingly confident that you can handle challenges on any level of your being. You may also shift from perceiving challenges and troublesome afflictions as being negative (on any level of your Self), and begin to experience them as challenges to learn more about personal and interpersonal growth, healing and spiritual awarenesses. So, rather than responding to pains or other health issues with groans or moans, you might respond with “I wonder what lessons I’m being invited to learn now?”

Another meta-positive use of any healing intervention is to use your own healing self-healing or therapeutic offering of healing to others as invitation for anyone and everyone, anywhere and everywhere, anywhen and everywhen to come along with you and participate in their own, similar healing around the issues you are working on, if they are willing to do so. This is commonly called ‘proxy’ healing when offered by one person to another. The extension of proxy healing to the collective consciousness, extending across all of time – both to the past and future – multiplies the healing benefits enormously (Benor, web references 3; 4).

In summary: Spirit informs every aspect of your being, and every aspect of your being can speak to you of spiritual awarenesses.

Maintaining integrity or deviating from integrity

Who is the brave one?

He who conquers his inner nature.

- Jewish tradition

Staying in integrity can be challenging. Again, wholistic guidance can be helpful.

As you grow up and move out into your own spheres of contacts and friendships, you encounter views and values that differ from your own. You may find yourself questioning the teachings of your family and community of origin. This is what brings young people together for soul-searching discussions. You may come to feel you have new and broader choices in values and rules than you had ever imagined for living your life in a place of integrity.

Your physical appetites and unconscious emotional cravings may tempt you to transgress against your own values and rules for integrity or those of your community or religion – in your thoughts, management of your feelings and relationships. The stories, moral codes and laws from Greek, Roman and Biblical times attest that people have struggled with these issues for at least several thousand years. Anthropological and sociological studies confirm that this is so in every human culture today (Rachels and Rachels, 2014).

You may feel yourself to be out of integrity when you deviate from a diet, a behavioral habit, a New Year’s resolution or a moral value you have always held with no question. These sorts of issues are often hints or gateways into starting psychotherapy. Your behavior may often be an indication that some aspect of your inner self is responding to core beliefs and ideas about integrity that differ from your conscious values. For instance:

- Your unconscious mind may be holding onto old, defensive rules to protect yourself from anticipated dangers, even though your conscious mind is wanting to move in a new direction. For instance, you want to give a speech at your daughter’s wedding, but your unconscious mind raises anxieties about speaking in public. In this sort of situation, your unconscious mind may be wanting to protect you from making a spectacle or a fool of yourself – because someone in your earlier life laughed at you when spoke in public. Your unconscious mind set the rule that you should avoid doing this, and it is doing its best to maintain the integrity of the old rules.
- You decide to lose twenty pounds because your clothing is far too tight and you don’t want to have to buy a new wardrobe. Your hands keep reaching for the sweets – on the store shelves and in your kitchen drawers at home. Your unconscious mind is working on older pleasure rules, practiced for many years, to help you feel more comfortable when you get upset – through comfort eating.

- You can't resolve a series of bad arguments with your spouse and are left with bitter hurt and resentments over the lacerating tongue, negative attitude and stubbornness you constantly experience. At work, an inviting smile from a co-worker tempts you to suggest a rendezvous – something you would ordinarily not think of.

These sorts of problems can be helped with psychotherapy. Old patterns are identified and released, and new ones, more appropriate for your current life situation, are installed and strengthened.

You live in a world where money buys power, influence in government and the ability to perpetrate crimes against humanity and nature with impunity. Your elected officials and the media, swayed by the wealthy elite, may choose to go to war or to invest your tax dollars in expensive projects that benefit the rich and further impoverish the poor and destroy the environment. Global warming is heading towards a tipping point beyond which our planet will become uninhabitable, and governments around the world are not taking appropriate action. How do you live in integrity in these situations?

Living in one piece is important for healing – in other words, knowing what your deepest values are and living by them, so that there is a coherence between who you are and how you live. If you believe one way but live another, that can be more damaging than any external stress. When you become separated from your own sense of values, it is very hard to heal.

- Rachel Naomi Remen

In summary

Integrity includes but goes beyond honesty. Honesty is telling the truth - in our words, conforming our words to reality. Integrity is conforming reality to our words - in other words, keeping promises and fulfilling expectations. This requires an integrated character, a oneness, primarily with self but also with life.

- Stephen R. Covey

You may impair your state of wholeness if you put yourself outside the frameworks of the good of the whole of your world. On inner levels, the healing of your body, emotions, mind, relationships and spirit are essential for your complete healing. Extending your healing to the other pixels on the big screen invites others to participate in your healing. Conversely, when you fail to swim along with the current of the flow of all life, you put stress on every level of your being. It is only when you are in harmony with All That Is that you are in a state of fullest integrity.

The process of movement toward full integrity is, for most people, the work of many lifetimes. By engaging in EP practices such as WHEE, you can experience the benefits of increasing integrity each and every day.

As human beings, we can never be entirely free of biases, since we are embodied beings who experience the world through our own, unique perceptions, life experiences, personal maps for navigating the unpredictable roads of life along our wholistic paths – regardless of how much we might try to be “objective.” It's perhaps even more important to admit, in integrity, that we each have our own biases.

WHEE and related methods can enhance personal, interpersonal, therapeutic and collective integrity. Integrity has numerous contributing factors. EP (represented by WHEE) gives you tools to eliminate limiting beliefs and trauma residues (current, childhood, past life and collective) that may hinder your being in fullest integrity. With these awarenesses and tools you can also reprogram positives into every level of your being: Body, Emotions, Mind, Relationships, and Spirit. When you are more centered and more wholly integrated within yourself, you model integrity for clients - one of the best

forms of teaching for a therapist. When you live in integrity, you will find yourself more alive and better able to navigate through a world in which integrity is often in question.

Note: This is an expansion on an [earlier version of this article](http://www.wholistichealingresearch.com/WHEE_for_integrity)
http://www.wholistichealingresearch.com/WHEE_for_integrity

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Notes

¹ See Benor (Web reference 2) for more on interactions of body, emotions, mind, relationships and spirit.

² Per the report of my friend and colleague, Scott Walker, of a lecture of hers he attended.

³ My discussion of spirit is based on a distillation of anecdotal reports of people who described their spiritual lives (in personal communications and in their written and video reports), plus research in out-of-body experiences, near death experiences, mystical experiences, reports of observing and communicating with apparitions (ghosts), mediumistic reports, past life recall of others and myself, religious and mystical experiences. These are taken from explorations with my personal spiritual experiences; my psychotherapy clients; and the writings of others (Benor, 2006).

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