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THERAPEUTIC APPROACHES IN THERAVĀDA BUDDHISM AND EXISTENTIALISM: A COMPARISON

by

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A THESIS

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance, a thesis entitled, "Therapeutic Approaches in Theravāda Buddhism and Existentialism: a Comparison," submitted by Sriruen Keawkungwal in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to compare the therapeutic approaches of Theravāda Buddhism and existentialism.

Buddhism and existentialism share the same base in psychotherapy, a well developed theory of man. There are many commonalities in the content of the base of the two schools: both view man as a complex being who is in the process of emerging to become a new individual, and who creates his own destiny; both consider suffering to be a part of life, which a man must learn to bear, cope with, and minimize. However, the two schools differ in various ways in their explanations of life and man. While the Buddhists claim that an individual's essence exists (as an accumulation of his past experiences in his past life) prior to his existence in each rebirth, when his essence and existence are joined, the existentialists believe that the individual's existence begins at birth, and his essence then gradually develops. Both schools share a belief that a person's essence is modified by the experiences of his life. The existentialists state that man is responsible for his actions in the present life, whereas the Buddhists affirm that man is responsible for his actions in three dimensions of time: the past, the present, and the future, which include life before birth and after death. The Buddhist concept of rebirth underlies most of the major differences between the two schools.

Therapeutic approaches in Buddhism are divided into two major groups: the promotion of psychological health, and the cure for psychological conflicts. While the existential approach centers on the cure for psychological problems, the Buddhist one places more emphasis on the promotion of psychological health. The curative therapeutic aspects of the two approaches share many principles including the stress on the self of the therapist as he creates the therapeutic relationship, with the focus on the here and now experience of an individual, the respect for a person as a unique, complex being of worth and dignity, and the belief in flexible therapeutic methods and techniques. Even though these two approaches share many common themes in terms of the curative aspects of psychotherapy, they are not identical. The Buddhist approach tends towards a philosophy of life, a way of thinking, and of living, which provides guidelines for the prevention of psychological conflicts. The existential one, one the other hand, is more concerned with the cure for psychological problems which are seen as the by-products of an industrialized, technological society.

In the writer's opinion, the methods and techniques required to attain the therapeutic goals are developed more clearly, practically, and conveniently in Buddhism than in existentialism. These methods and techniques may or may not be adaptable to the existential approach. The writer proposes that research be undertaken to investigate the possible therapeutic results of combining the methods and techniques of the two schools.

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If there is any value in this work, I dedicate it to my parents, my professors, and the friends whom I have had the privilege to know in this country.

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To suffer is to suffer well, to accept
The untoward circumstance, to bear with skill
The weighted balance which the fool, inept
In equilibrium, would strive to kill
With flight or malediction. Would he thrust
With hand of will the pendulum of rule
From powered harmony, the law is just
And swings upon the wise man as the fool.
To receive, to suffer wholly, to digest
The living deed's implicit consequence.
To suffer is to grow, to understand
The void of darkness holds a proffered hand.

(Humphreys, 1969, p. 55.)

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

What is Buddhism? An oriental religion. This is the answer anyone would give if asked the above question. And, in his mind, he has a vague image of people in yellow robes, gathered in colorful temples, performing strange rites, mixed with superstition.

But all those who have made the effort to sit down and study carefully the Buddha's teaching have been amazed by its logical development, its scientific background, and its everlasting applicability to human everyday life. In this respect, Buddhism is more than a religion in the usual acceptance of this term. It is a way of thinking, of living. It includes religion, philosophy, literature, arts, sociology and psychology. It is explained in the words of Humphreys (1969):

> Buddhism today represents the largest field of thought in the known history of mankind . . . links may be found with Western science, psychology and sociology, in many cases Buddhist scriptures show that these modern 'discoveries' have been taught for at least two thousand years (p. 21).

Gard (1962) describes Buddhism as follows:

> Conceived in Asia, Buddhism is an historic expression of a universal human ideal. It offers any individual or

> society a voluntary way of thought and conduct, based upon an analysis of conditioned existence, dependent upon supreme human effort, and directed toward the realization of freedom in perfect existence (p. 13).

This is due to the fact that Buddhism is not a "revealed religion," but the experimental results of the search of a man who endeavoured to explore the human condition up to and beyond its utmost boundaries, taking himself as the experimental subject, and using all the physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual means a human being can dispose. Therefore, Buddha's teaching is close to man, centered on man, and meant to solve human suffering.

With this background acquired by birth and family education, when brought into contact with modern psychology, the writer was amazed by the fact that Buddhist psychology matched very closely modern psychology, mainly on the scientific background. Since then, the writer has had the idea to do a comparative study of Buddhism and the so-called "Western" psychology.

This study will be concentrated on a special field of psychology. It will be a comparison of the therapeutic approaches of Buddhism and the North American school of psychotherapy based on existentialism. The existential school was chosen because it is the latest expression on this continent of the European existential philosophy which is an explanation of life and man. As mentioned above, Buddhist therapeutic psychology also is centered on man. However, May (1959) states that though Buddhism and existentialism share a similar

basis in psychotherapy, they operate on different levels as to their therapeutic approaches and goals. May did not explain these differences. The writer, therefore, decided to tentatively elaborate on them. Also, it is expected that many commonalities in the therapeutic approaches of both schools might be revealed. In addition, similarities and differences in the theories of man held by Buddhists and existentialists might be delineated.

The word "Buddhism" in this study refers to Theravāda Buddhism. This school of Buddhism was chosen for two reasons. First, the writer knows it best. Second, it is a conservative school which holds to the basic principles. Those principles are the same in all Buddhist schools (e.g. Zen, Tibetan). The Buddhist terms, mentioned during the discussion will be in the Pāli words which are based on the book: A Popular Dictionary of Buddhism (Humphreys, 1962).

The term "Existential psychotherapy," as stated in this paper, is limited to American existential psychotherapy, which is based on the European existential thoughts in philosophy, psychology, and psychiatry. There are many American existential schools (e.g. May, Roger, Dreyfus), and there are commonalities, differences, and conflicts among them. This study will not refer specifically to any particular school, but will focus on the common themes of all of these schools.

The words counseling and psychotherapy will be used interchangeably as Patterson (1961) explains that the meanings of these two terms are identical (p. 7).

This is a theoretical rather than an experimental

study, and the discussion will be broad and general, as the pervasive nature of the subject matter dictates. It is hoped that this study might contribute some stimulating ideas to the existing schools of psychotherapy.

Chapter II gives the reader an orientation to Buddhism in general, and to the base of Buddhist psychotherapy. It consists of these topics: the historical life of the Buddha, the basic themes of his teaching (Buddha Dhamma), a short description of Theravāda Buddhism, and the Buddhist theory of man.

Chapter III deals with Buddhist therapeutic approaches. Two major topics are discussed: the promotion of psychological health (the general approaches and the meditation approaches), and the cure for psychological disturbances.

Chapter IV orients the reader with a short description of the historical development of the existential philosophy, which is the base of existential psychotherapy. The main body of this chapter consists of these topics: a brief definition of existential psychotherapy, the existential theory of man, therapeutic goals, the therapeutic relationship, therapeutic methods and techniques, and the therapist.

Chapter V is a comparison of various therapeutic aspects of Buddhism and existentialism.

Chapter VI consists of a summary, a discussion, and a conclusion of this comparative study.

CHAPTER II

BUDDHISM

This chapter is designed to acquaint the reader with Buddhism in general through discussion of the historical life of the Buddha, his teaching (Buddha Dhamma), Theravāda Buddhism, and the Buddhist theory of man.

THE HISTORICAL LIFE OF THE BUDDHA

The founder of Buddhism was Prince Siddhattha Gotama. He was born in 623 B.C., an heir to the throne of the kingdom of Sakya in ancient India. His father surrounded him with wealth, luxury, and royal splendour, giving him three palaces to reside in--one for each Indian season. At the age of sixteen he was married to Princess Yasodharā, and had a son by her.

It was said that his intelligence was surpassed by none. Despite his sheltered life, by the age of twenty-nine he became aware of and deeply depressed by the fact of suffering in life. He realized that every human regardless of his class, wealth, and status, was afflicted with various facets of suffering--sorrow, disease, disappointment, old age, and death. He believed that all facets of human suffering were caused. Whenever all these causes were really understood and completely abolished, man would be without pain physically

and psychologically. He decided to try to discover the non-suffering goal. He hoped that the success of his discovery would be profitable not only to himself, but to his family, his kingdom, and all mankind. Therefore, he renounced his princehood, his kingdom, and his family, and became a student.

In India during that era, other people were interested in discovering a way to prevent and eliminate human suffering. Various experiments were attempted, resulting in many schools of thought, each with its own philosophy, theory, and practice. Each school claimed that it could help a person attain psychological health-- either temporarily or permanently.

Prince Siddhattha studied with the founders and followers of the four major schools of thought--Ālāra Kālāma, Udaka, Yoga, and Tapas. He mastered the philosophy, theory, and practice of each school, but found that, although they greatly aided his intellectual, psychological, and spiritual development, none of them provided him with the knowledge he was seeking in order to explain the causes of human suffering and to determine the means to end it totally. He also found that some of the methods and techniques of the schools were dangerous to the physical and mental health of practitioners. Therefore, he postulated his own theory, and attempted to validate it by means of experimentation. He at last discovered how human suffering may be lessened, and ended totally. It was six years since he had left his palace. His remaining forty-five years were spent in teaching and training others to eliminate suffering. As a

result of his discovery he became a Buddha, and his principles were known as Buddhism or Buddha Dhamma. The term Buddha Dhamma will be used in this paper.

BUDDHA DHAMMA

Dhamma has several meanings: to sustain, to establish, norm, custom, truth, element, duty, the law of nature, and the law of cause and effect. Buddha Dhamma refers to the law of nature, the scientific discovery of the concrete and abstract objects and ideas of the Buddha. In this regard, it is considered to be the universal truth. Burns (1966), an American psychiatrist, states his opinion concerning Buddha Dhamma:

> The facts discovered by the Buddha are available for all to discover, and in this sense a man can be a Buddhist and never hear about the religion of Buddhism nor the teachings of the Buddha . . . Buddhism regards itself as a group of important truths, which, when properly understood, can be of great value to almost any human being . . . The word "Buddhism" is only a symbol which represents certain beliefs and concepts. These truths can be equally as well represented by some other word, institution, or symbol (pp. 6-10).

Buddha Dhamma is both a body of doctrines and a way of living and thinking. The doctrines can never be understood fully until applied in personal practice. Appreciation of Buddha Dhamma can not occur until one experiences the consequences of correct practice. Buddha Dhamma, therefore, has three meanings-Buddha Dhamma in scripture, Buddha Dhamma in practice, and Buddha Dhamma in achievement.

Buddha Dhamma is sometimes regarded as equal to God or another supernatural being. Therefore, in Buddhism, it is

the scientific truth, the law of nature, of cause and effect, that creates man and his destiny.

Buddha Dhamma is written in a series of scriptures known as the "Canon" or "Tipitakas." The word "Canon" will be used throughout this paper. It consists of many sections, each concerned with a different subject, and is twenty times larger than the Bible in size. Buddha Dhamma is, therefore, divided into various fields of knowledge: philosophy, biology, physics, logics, metaphysics, and psychology. Therapeutic psychology is one facet of Buddhist philosophy and psychology.

During the Buddha's life-time there were many schools of philosophy and psychology, whose founders and followers proclaimed that their schools were the "only correct one" which would lead man to freedom from life's suffering, physically and psychologically. A group of people named Kālāmas were confused by the claims of the many different "correct schools." They asked the Buddha's opinion, which was given as follows:

> It is proper for you, Kālāmas, to doubt, to be uncertain. Uncertainty has arisen in you about what is doubtful. Come, Kālāmas. Do not go upon an authoritative tradition; nor upon what has been acquired by repeated hearing; nor upon rumour; nor upon what is in a scripture; nor upon speculative metaphysical theories; reasons and arguments; nor upon a point of view; nor upon specious reasoning; nor upon accepting a statement as true because it agrees with a theory that one is already convinced of; nor upon another's seeming ability; nor upon the consideration 'Our teacher say thus and so.' Kālāmas, when you yourselves know: 'These things are bad; these things are blamable; these things are censured by the wise; undertaken and observed, these things lead to harm and ill', abandon them (Canon, Burns, 1966, p. 7).

The Buddha urged that an individual should feel free to study any philosophical doctrines, adopting or rejecting them as he reasonably sees fit.

He is quoted as saying:

> It is certainly hard to change one's set opinions, but a man should let himself freely test all philosophical systems, adopting and rejecting them as he sees fit. But the man who is wise no longer concerns himself with this or that system (of philosophy), he neither prides nor deceives himself. He goes along his independent way (Canon, Burns, 1966, p. 7).

THERAVĀDA BUDDHISM

Several distinct schools of Buddhism emerged after the death of the Buddha due to factors such as factional differences in the followers of Buddhism and the spread of Buddhism to other countries. Theravāda Buddhism resulted from the second council of Buddhist monks and laymen held at Vesāli, during 254 B.C. Followers of this school were the first to write the Buddhist doctrines into scripture form (the Canon). Unlike other schools, this group has submitted no corrections nor additions to its Canon. It is therefore considered to be the conservative school of Buddhism. The basic doctrines of Theravāda Buddhism are common to most Buddhist schools. It spread out from India to Ceylon, Burma, Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, and Thailand, arriving in each country at a different time.

THEORY OF MAN

Buddhist theory of man, a section of Buddha Dhamma, is a large field of study based on the fact that man is a mysterious complicated being. The ensuing discussion of the Buddhist theory of man centers around the following topics: characteristics of life, man creating himself under the law of action-reaction, man as a combination of five components, the central theme of the theory of man, and the Buddhist concepts of ignorance, sense organs, contact, desire, fixation, and birth or existence.

Characteristics of Life

There are three characteristics of life--impermanence (anicca), suffering (dukkha), and no-self (anattā).

Impermanence refers to inconsistency, the flow, and the change. Everything in the universe, concrete and abstract, is impermanent. The whole being of a person (physical components, thoughts, feelings, drives, perceptions) is dynamic and is continually in the process of change.

Suffering has many facets--anxiety, frustration, pain, illness, disease, death, disharmony, discomfort. It refers to anything that is the opposite of all that we mentally embrace in the terms well-being, perfection, wholeness and bliss. Man's existence and suffering are two sides of the same coin, as his whole personality and environment are bound up with impermanency.

In view of the constant change of the whole personality, there is no-self. This is not to deny that Mr. Smith or Mrs. Jones do exist, but this does point out that they only have continuity dependent on certain factors. These factors are impermanent. Buasri (1970) illustrates the concept of no-self:

> . . . take an object we call a chest of drawers. It is just a name given to a group of materials put together in such a manner as to enclose a portion of space, so that items may be placed in it. Once the materials, namely, wood, nails, etc. are taken apart, the chest does not exist any more. It has become nothingness. In the same manner, that which is called a being, a person, an individual, or "I", is merely a changing combination of physical and mental phenomena, and has no real existence in itself (p. 28).

Man Creating Himself Under the Law of Action-Reaction

Man creates himself. His suffering and happiness are the results of his own actions. It is the law of action-reaction (Kamma-Vipāka) that creates his destiny, not luck, nor chance, nor a supernatural being. The English word "action" does not convey the precise meaning of the Buddhist term "Kamma." Kamma includes all the various overt and covert behavior of a person relating to himself, others, society, and culture (e.g., feeling, thinking, language behavior, eating, walking, and dressing). The word"action" mentioned during this discussion refers to the meaning of "Kamma." The word "Vipāka" means reaction, results. The consequences of various actions differ. The process which is triggered by an action and which finally leads to a specific result may be superficial or profound, depending on the nature

of the action. The results of some actions may be seen easily while others are hardly noticeable. Some actions are insignificant due to the dampening effect of other more significant actions. Some reactions are immediate while others are delayed for days, months, years, or even to the next cycle of life after physical death-rebirth. (The concept of "rebirth" will be further explained). Full understanding of the law of action-reaction requires clear thinking, a deep, calm state of mind, and deep insight into the complexities of human relations and behavior. Humphreys (1969) comments:

> As such the law is profound and immensely difficult, and if we understood it to the full, we should be masters of the universe. Either cause and effect hold sway or they do not; there can be no exceptions, although the complexity of the inter-relationship may be utterly beyond our present intellect to grasp. This law is indeed the key to all events in the world of time and space, and it is worth the courage needed to face what a full acceptance of it implies . . . Rebirth, a natural and therefore reasonable answer to the apparent injustice of daily round. Why should this man be born a beggar, this a prince? Why this a cripple, this a genius, that a fool? Why this a high born Indian woman, that a low born Englishman? These are effect (pp. 83-101).

In conclusion, man is the product of what he has done, felt, or thought in the past, and his present feelings, thoughts, and actions will determine his future. Whatsoever a man reaps, that has he also sown. There is no eternal punishment, nor eternal reward, but rather happiness and sorrow in proportion to one's own feelings, thoughts, and actions. Heaven and hell are here and now, an integral part of life, the result of one's feeling, thinking and acting.

Man as a Combination of Five Components

Man is a combination of these five components: body (Rūpa), feeling and sensation (Vedanā), perception (Saññā), drive or volition (Sankhāra), and consciousness (Viññāna).

Body refers to the corporal structure as well as its function and behavior. It consists of the four basic elements: the solid element (e.g. bones), the fluid element (e.g. blood, water), the heating element (e.g. temperature), and the vibrating element (e.g. respiration).

Feeling and Sensation refer to both physical and emotional feelings. They are perceived through sense organs and thinking processes. Feeling is divided into three major groups--pleasant, unpleasant, and neutral.

Perception comprises both sensual and mental awareness. It is more than a reflexive reaction to sense stimuli, and may be described as cognition and interpretation of one's sensation. It includes perception of objective things, events, imagery, and memory.

Drive or Volition does not convey the accurate meaning of the Buddhist term--Sankhāra. The most accurate meaning is "together-maker." It includes complexes, conditioned reflexes, and mental habits of all kinds, including sub-conscious habits and memories. It refers to all active dispositions, tendencies, impulses, volitions,and strivings, whether conscious or repressed. They all constitute a drive or volition that urges a person to take a certain action (Kamma-formation).

Consciousness--The Buddhist consciousness refers to:

a. The normal consciousness, the relation between subject and object.

b. The empirical mind, the vehicle by which one cognizes one's phenomenal worlds and gains the experience of life.

c. The consciousness which lies below the threshold of normal experience (the subliminal consciousness) in which the experiences of the past are registered and retained; the results of such experience becoming faculties in the next physical birth (rebirth).

d. There are then, six kinds of consciousness: consciousness of sight, consciousness of hearing, consciousness of smelling, consciousness of taste, consciousness of touch, and consciousness of non-sensous objects (as memory, thinking).

Humphreys (1969) describes this term:

> It is never the same for two moments together, being in a constant state of flux. It is the centre of conscious existence in its ever-changing forms, and is like the current of a river, which still maintains one constant form, one seeming identity, though not one single drop remains today of all the volume which composed that river yesterday (p. 94).

These five components are also grouped into two major categories: body and mind, or concrete and abstract. In other words, man is a combination of mind and body or concrete and abstract. These are always related. Ward (1947) comments that the Buddhist analysis of man's being into five components is similar to the scientific monism (p. 79).

The Central Theme of the Buddhist Theory of Man

The central theme of the Buddhist theory of man is known by many names: wheel of life, chain of causation, interdependent origination, and twelve Nidānas. It is an explanation of all the facets of a being including his unseen origination, his composite concrete and abstract, and his reaction to and interaction with external and internal stimuli. A being consists of twelve psycho-somatic conditions which are related and interdependent. They are ignorance (Avijjā), drive (Sankhāra), consciousness (Viññāna), body and mind (Rūpa-Nāma), sense organs (Āyatana), contact (Phassa), feeling (Vedanā), desire (Tanhā), fixation (Upādāna), becoming (Bhava), birth or existence (Jāti), and suffering (Dukkha). The first condition depends on the second one. The second one, in turn, depends on the third one. The motion continues in this manner to the twelfth condition (see the figure in table one, p. 19). They are not, however, related only in this order, but interrelated in an endless whole. In regard to this explanation, a being comes to exist in the world through a natural process. Suffering is an integral part of life, and there are many causes of suffering. Dr. Carus's description on the wheel of life was quoted by Humphreys (1969):

> In the beginning there is existence blind and without knowledge: and in this sea of ignorance there are stirrings formative and organizing. From this there arises awareness which begets organisms that live as individual beings. These develop the six fields, that is, the five senses and the mind. The six fields come in contact with things. Contact begets sensation which creates the thirst of individualized being. This creates

> a cleaving to things which produces the growth and continuation of selfhood. Selfhood continues in renewed birth. These renewed births of selfhood are the cause of suffering, old age, sickness and death. They produce lamentation, anxiety, and despair (p. 99).

The wheel of life is explained in the Sansakrit verse by Ācārya Nagarjuna, a well known scholar in Buddhism. This verse was translated into English by anonymous writers (1966):

> Know the Great Sage has proclaimed:
> Unknowing being, constructs are;
> These come to be, comes consciousness,
> Then with the latter, name and form;
> And thence arise the six sense spheres;
> From them impinge the contacts (six);
>
> Contact being, feelings are;
> The ground of craving, feeling is;
> Where craving's found there clinging comes;
> From clinging is becoming born;
> Becoming (in the three worlds' round),
> Gives rise to birth (of varied kinds);
>
> Where birth takes place are naturally
> Fear, old age and misery,
> Disease, desire and death,
> As well a mass of other ills.
> When birth's no longer brought about
> Then all these links are ever stopped.
>
> Thus the Conqueror made clear
> Conditioned co-production's work-
> Profound its meaning is.
> Who perfectly can penetrate
> This Teaching knows the Dhamma True,
> The Buddha understands.
>
> (pp. 41-42.)

The Buddhist Concepts of Ignorance (Avijjā), Sense Organs (Ayatana), Contact (Phassa), Desire (Tanhā), Fixation (Upādāna), Birth or Existence (Jāti)

Ignorance refers to the lack of knowledge of self both onsuperficial and profound levels. The opposite of ignorance

is continuous self-fulfilment (Nirvāna). Self-fulfilment refers to self-actualization, the full knowledge about one's present self and the origination of self. Each being strives to achieve Nirvāna stage--to have full knowledge of himself. The more he knows about himself, the less he suffers even though causes of suffering still exist. In other words, each being is struggling to eliminate ignorance and suffering.

Sense organs: There are six sense modalities: vision, audition, taste, touch, smell, and the sense of intellect or consciousness (the storehouse of meaning).

Contact refers to the interaction of the six sense organs with external and internal stimuli.

Desire refers to the three types of desire: desire to become, desire to maintain, and desire not to become.

Fixation refers to either an obsessive preoccupation with or attachment to concrete and abstract objects, things, events, experiences, ideas or habits, or a persistent concentration of libidinal energy on certain objects or qualities.

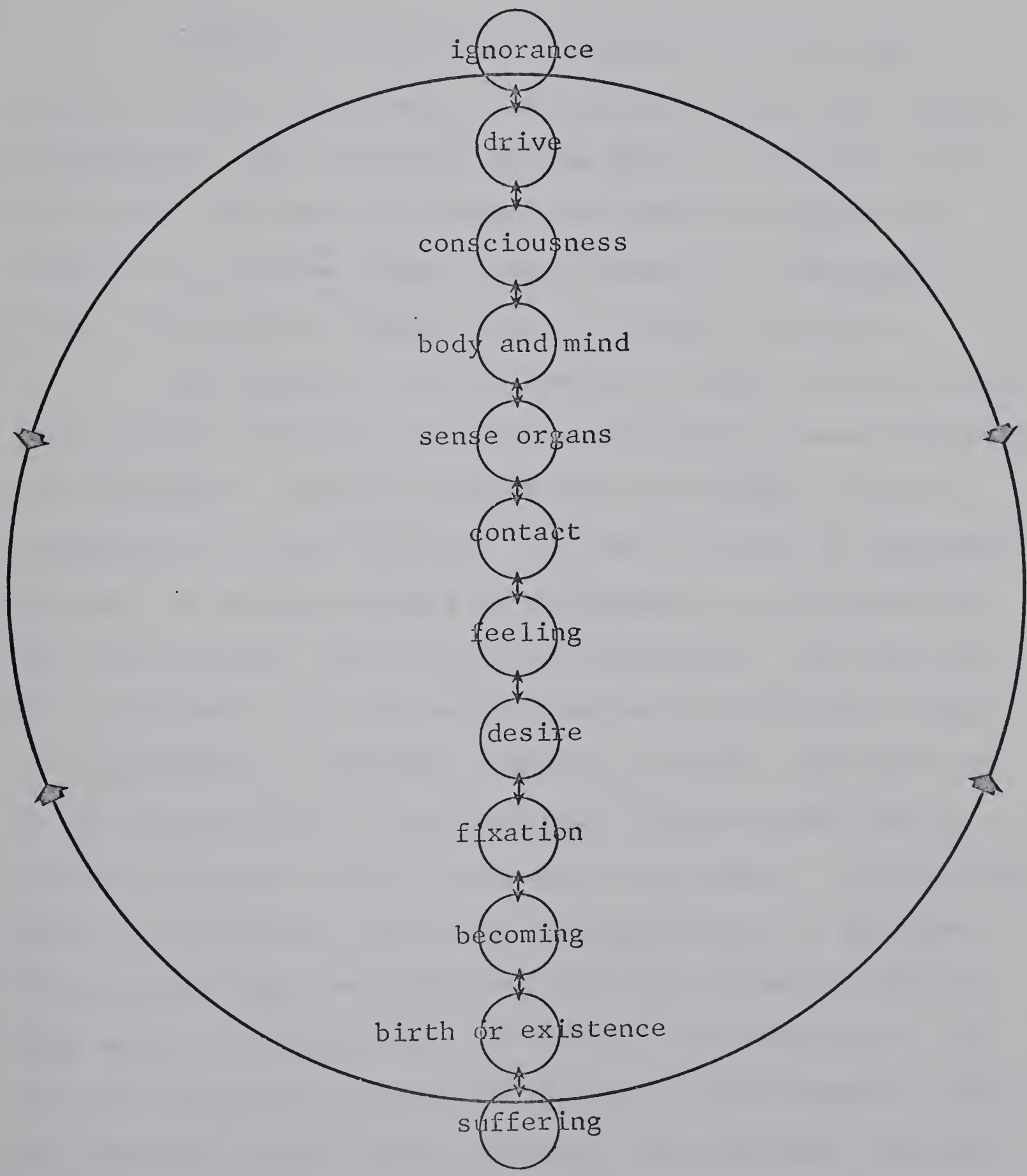
Birth or Existence. The English word birth or existence does not convey the accurate meaning of the Buddhist term--Jāti. This word refers to either (1) the process by which an individual becomes a new person (physically and psychologically) during the course of his existence, or (2) the rebirth after one's physical death. In Buddhist psychology, each being yearns for the continuous fulfilment of self-actualization. If he cannot reach it while he is alive, his being will continue after his physical death. The concept of

rebirth in Buddhism is different from reincarnation. Burns (1967) explains the difference in terms of analogy:

> Buddhism uses the word "rebirth" to distinguish its position from the Hindu doctrine of reincarnation via an immortal soul . . . To understand the Hindu position one may imagine a row of various kinds of containers such as a drinking glass, a cup, a bowl, a pot, etc. One takes a marble and deposits it in the first container; then lifts it out and puts it in the second and so on down to the end of the row. The marble represents the soul and the containers the various bodies successively inhabited by the soul. Though each container is different, the marble is essentially unchanged throughout the entire process. To contrast the Buddhist view, imagine that one lights a match and then with the match lights a candle at the same time extinguishing the match. Then with the candle one lights a Coleman lantern (pressure lantern) and extinguishes the candle. Now we ask the question: Is the flame which one burned the match the same flame now burning in the lantern? One can answer the question either "yes" or "no", both replies being equally appropriate.
>
> While the child is not the same as the adult, the food the child eats, the values he incorporates and the education he receives will strongly determine the nature of his adult existence. And similarly for successive births (pp. 5-6).

FIGURE I

The interrelationships among the twelve psychosomatic conditions are shown diagrammatically:



SUMMARY

Buddhism is more than a religion. It includes various fields of knowledge. Prince Siddhattha was the founder of Buddhism. His teachings, Buddha Dhamma, are based on the scientific discovery of concrete and abstract objects and ideas. As a result, Buddha Dhamma becomes the universal truth. The book on Buddha Dhamma is called the Canon.

The Buddhist theory of man is a large field of study. Only a brief discussion of its complexities has been attempted in this paper. It may be summarized accordingly: Man is a combination of mind and body. He comes to exist in the world through the natural process of phylogenesis and creates his own destiny under the law of cause and effect. His self and his environment are governed by the law of continuous change, or impermanence. Therefore, there is no self, and suffering is an integral part of his existence. Man searches for an end of suffering--whether temporary or permanent. His ultimate goal is a permanent liberation from suffering, or Nirvāna. This implies that the individual does not allow the stimuli that would ordinarily cause suffering to influence him. It is also explained as inward fulfilment, or contentment. When an individual cannot reach this goal, his existence continues

after his physical death (rebirth). Buddhist therapeutic psychology centers around the ways to help oneself and others to bear, prevent, cure, minimize, and eliminate suffering.

CHAPTER III

THERAPEUTIC APPROACHES IN BUDDHISM

> One thing I teach, O Bhikkhus, suffering and deliverance from suffering.
>
> (Canon, Humphreys, 1961, p. 16.)

Buddhist psychotherapy deals with the psychological problems of so-called normal individuals and involves non-medical treatment. Its ultimate goal is continuous self-fulfilment or permanent liberation from suffering. It is a large field of study in philosophy, theory, and practice, concerned with many aspects of psychotherapy including what (type of treatment), when, where (the situation, the place), why (the reasons for treatment), and how (the methods and techniques). It is concerned with two areas: the promotion of psychological health and the cure of psychological disturbances. This chapter is centered around the "how"--the methods and techniques of psychotherapy. The preventative and curative methods and techniques of psychotherapy are often overlapping, but for the purpose of simplification, these two categories are discussed separately.

Therapy, treatment, and practice convey the same meaning in Buddhist literature. Therefore, the three terms

will be used interchangeably in this paper.

THE PROMOTION OF PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH

The promotion of psychological health is the development of the capacity to bear and cope with suffering without a high intensity of feeling (e.g. torture, restlessness, excitability, or anger). It is the means of establishing emotional maturity in the personality, of preparing to cope with psychological conflicts. The many methods and techniques may be divided into two major groups--the general approach and the specific approach (Meditation). The practice may be done alone, in a group, or with the help of a second individual in a one-to-one relationship.

The General Approach

The general approach is so named since the treatment may be performed in virtually any situation, a guide is unnecessary, and complicated methods and techniques are not required. It may be practised by everyone, everywhere, at any time. This practice is a part of everyday living. Daily practice is therefore recommended and is regarded as psychological exercise for the maintenance of psychological health. The practice is categorized into eight groups: right insight, right way of thinking, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right awareness, and right concentration (The Eightfold Noble Paths). The practice of a single group is not sufficient, since only the eight groups together

constitute the necessary and sufficient condition for the attainment of mental health. However, this paper focuses on right awareness, which has many facets, four of which are self-awareness, awareness of the law of impermanence, awareness of natural phenomena, and awareness of the law of action-reaction. The preceding examples of right awareness will be discussed accordingly.

Self-awareness refers to a person's awareness of his physical activities, feeling (sensual and mental), and thinking processes. While walking, a person knows that he is walking. While sitting, he knows that he is sitting. He is aware of the posture of his body. When a person is hungry, he is aware of his hunger. When he feels sleepy, he knows that he is sleepy. When angry, he is aware of his anger. When restless, he knows that he is restless. He is aware of the state of his thinking process, whether rational, irrational, or decisive. Psychological tests, psychotherapy, or sensitivity training that will lead to the understanding of one's feelings and thinking processes are less necessary if one practices self-awareness during the course of one's daily activities.

Self-awareness prevents absent-mindedness, carelessness, and forgetfulness. For example: Mr. Smith knows that he should not drink too much, but he gets intoxicated nonetheless. At the time he consumed that extra drink, he was probably unaware of his knowledge. Conze (1966) expresses his opinion on the practice of self-awareness:

To be aware when one sits, walks, stands, eats, speaks and so-on, and to remain fully conscious in all activities. The man who has imposed strict awareness on all he does, and remains as watchful as a gatekeeper at a city gate, is safe from injury by the passion, just as a well guarded town is safe from its foe . . . On all occasions he guards his thought as a nurse guards a child. Without the armour of awareness a man is an easy target of the defilements, just as on a battlefield someone who has lost his armour is easily shot by his enemies (p. 106).

Awareness of the Law of Impermanence

Bear in mind that life is like
A bubble frail i' the water blown
And any time is the time for death
Going to sleep, will one awake?
Waking, still breath comes and goes-
By this be deeply moved!

Seeing all things impermanent,
Insubstantial, lacking help,
Without protector or abode,-
O, Lord of Men, be passionless
For know this wheel (wandering on)
Is pithless as the plantain tree.

(Nagarjuna, 1966, p. 55.)

All that exists (life, objects, sickness, events, wealth, fame, happiness, suffering, status, friendship) passes through the cycle of existence--birth, growth, decay, and death. Everything is constantly in the process of change.

Life is continuous, ever seeking expression in a new form. It is a process of flow. Resisting the flow is an act against the law of nature.

Frequently, awareness of the above formulae, or other similar ones, results in the prevention and cure of psychological problems such as the inability to adapt to new circumstances and the lack of physical and psychological adjustment.

Awareness of the natural phenomena of life. People are encouraged to be conscious of the following formula:

> Everybody is bound up in sickness, old age, and death. These are the natural phenomena of life.

This type of awareness protects people from a high intensity of feeling when they or their beloved ones are experiencing these phenomena. They learn to regard these events as natural phenomena similar to the changing of the seasons.

Awareness of the law of action-reaction (Kamma-Vipāka).

> I am the owner of action, the heir to action, the birth place of action, the relation of action and the pathway of action. Whatever action I have done, good or evil, that shall I be heir to (receive) (Canon, Khantipālo, 1965, p. 33).

Awareness of this formula prevents self-pity, self-rejection, carelessness, and excessive anxiety.

> This being, that becomes, from the arising of this, that arises; this not becoming, that does not become, from the ceasing of this, that ceases (Canon, Humphreys, 1960, p. 95).

A person is constantly in the process of change. People continually set new goals. Some of them may be unrealistic and cause psychological problems such as the loss of self-esteem, self-pity, or self-hatred. If an individual is aware of the above formula he tends to choose realistic goals. He also is able to face the pleasant and unpleasant events of life without a high intensity of feeling. Keeping an awareness of this formula is a method of training to become a reasonable person.

Only one aspect of the eightfold noble path--right awareness--has been discussed. Further study is recommended for those readers who wish to learn about the other seven ways.

The Specific Approach (Meditation)

The "specific approach" is so named because its methods and techniques of practice are complicated. Most often this approach is called the "meditation approach," the term which will be used in this paper. Yet the word "meditation" does not convey the true meaning of the original Buddhist term, Samatha and Vipassanā. "Concentration," "absorption," and "ecstasy" have been used to try to communicate the Buddhist meaning more accurately, but no English word can provide a precise definition. The simplest definition that may be given is "one-pointedness of mind."

The following discussion on the meditation approach centers around three topics: the achievements of meditation, the meditation processes, and the meditation methods and techniques.

The achievements of meditation. The correct practice of meditation leads to psychological health and is a cure for psychological disturbance. The following are some of these results:

Self-awareness. Meditation causes awareness of physical posture, feelings, and thought processes. The self-awareness achieved in the meditation sessions may be transferred to daily life.

Patience and contentment in character development. Meditation exercises bring about the eradication of hatred and restlessness. Patience is easily developed if restlessness and hatred already have been subdued in the mind. Impatience is the consequence of inadequate reflection. Problems sometimes resolve themselves when not interfered with. Impatience and anxiety--the diseases of the modern business world--go hand-in-hand. To practise meditation requires patience, and patience is increased by the practising of meditation. A person whose patience is highly developed can tolerate any type of person or situation, whether pleasant or unpleasant.

People usually are motivated by ceaseless drives, which may be compared to hunger. He who is hungry all the time feels psychologically uncomfortable. Contentment is necessary to curb a person's endless drive, just as a brake is necessary to stop a moving car. Contentment brings psychological satisfaction. The self-satisfaction that occurs during the meditation period is the basis for controlling the extreme of one's drives.

Insight. Meditation causes people to feel calm, at ease, and self-assured. Therefore, insight into personal problems and their solutions may be achieved. Insight also refers to the understanding of the nature of man, the wheel of life. The level of insight varies with the intensity and the method of the practice of meditation and the intelligence and personality type of the individual. Fear, anxiety, and

worry are due to the lack of insight into problems and the knowledge of how to solve them. The highest level of insight is the discovery of a method of ending all the physical and psychological problems of life--death, sickness, old age, lamentation, and anxiety. It is the full understanding of the wheel of life, and the eightfold noble paths.

Concentrating mind. The first gain due to the practice of meditation is a concentrating mind. This achievement is essential. An experience may be profitable only when an individual is able to concentrate on its nature. Therefore, the primary purpose of meditation is to reach the goal of a concentrating mind.

No thought. Labourers often are divided into three categories--unskilled, semi-skilled, and highly-skilled. The thought-processes of a person may also be classified into three levels--the discriminating, the intellectual, and the universal.

The discriminating level is the level of thought that perceives external stimuli through the visual, auditory, tactile, olfactory, and gustatory modalities.

The intellectual level is the level of thought that integrates the perceptions that make the inner adjustments which are necessary to harmonize the relations of the discriminating mind.

The universal level is the "no thought" level. This level of thought is one step above the concentrating mind. Conze (1962) explains the Buddhist concept of "no thought:"

> Beyond both conscious and unconscious minds as modern psychologists understand them, there is, at the bottom of the mind, a centre which is quite still. This deep calm is, however, usually overlaid with so much turbulence that most people remain incredulous when told of this submerged spot of stillness in their innermost hearts (p. 52).

When thinking on the "no thought" level the individual feels extremely calm. The "no thought" level is much more effective than the other two levels of thought. As a result, insight into the problems of life, and their solution, occurs most rapidly, easily, and correctly, when the mind is operating on this level.

"No thought" is the treatment used to minimize the excessive self-consciousness, excitement, and nervousness which often occur when a person is facing a difficult or strange situation.

A cure for loneliness. The fear of loneliness is the icy core of much that passes as "human warmth." Often a person reduces this fear by joining a group of people. Spending long periods of time by oneself in quiet meditation leads to the ability to bear solitude and the overcoming of the fear of loneliness.

Anxiety reduction. Anxiety is an integral part of a person's existence since everyone is in the process of becoming in a world of change and impermanence. Also, in the core of the mind there is a basic anxiety due to the lack of a full understanding of the environment and the nature of the self. Other forms of anxiety and uneasiness draw their strength from this anxiety. Anxiety may be experienced when

the individual is alone and withdrawn from the world. Usually people try to avoid these experiences by keeping themselves occupied, seeking company, getting involved in activities. The Buddhist contention is that no matter how skillfully and successfully a person avoids coming to grip with this basic anxiety, he will never feel at ease until he overcomes it gradually by the practice of meditation.

The correction of undesirable behavior. With the correct practice of meditation the mind becomes calm. This state of mind is similar to a blank sheet of paper on which any picture may be painted. This is indeed the best time for the correction of vices such as smoking, laziness, or alcoholic addiction. The process of correction is gradual, however. An example is given below:

A person who wants to stop smoking repeatedly recites this desire during the period that his mind is calm. If he makes an effort to practise in this way continually, he will be able to give up smoking.

Relaxation. Thought processes work constantly. The resulting lack of rest may cause damage such as poor memory, headaches, insomnia, or psychosomatic illness. Conze (1969) describes the necessity of rest in terms of an analogy:

> In controlling the traffic at cross roads, we have the traffic lights, Go! and Stop! If there were only the Go! and not the Stop! accidents would be inevitable. The Stop! is essential (p. 136).

People rest by concentrating on various activities such as sports, games, music, or books. In Buddhism, relax-

ation is best achieved through the practice of meditation. A feeling of joy and happiness is attained which words cannot express.

The meditation process. The meditation process is concerned with the guide, the meditator, the types of relationship between the guide and the meditator, and the place of practice.

A good guide is very necessary for practicing meditation. Practising meditation by oneself without a good guide, sufficient knowledge, skill, and experience is certainly a waste of time, and occasionally may be dangerous. The Buddhist word for "guide" is "Guru," meaning not only "guide," but also counselor, teacher, therapist, and trainer. The guide acts as a doctor for psychological problems. He diagnoses them and selects the most suitable methods and techniques differently. When a person becomes more experienced with the treatment, he can practise without a guide.

Meditators are persons of all ages, intellect groups, and personality types. They must be emotionally stable, especially during the meditation period. If they are not emotionally secure, the profitable effects of meditation will not be achieved, and the results may be harmful. A person who is feeling afflicted with a high intensity of feeling (fear, restlessness, or anxiety) is forbidden to undertake meditation practice.

Three types of relationship with the guide are permitted. The first is "intrapersonal," wherein the person

acts as his own guide. The second is "interpersonal," where the guide and the meditator interact in a one-to-one relationship. The third is "interpersonal," wherein the "guide" interacts with the group. The ultimate goal of the treatment is for the participants to achieve harmonious intrapersonal relationships.

Meditation practice can be done both in private and in a group. However in using the complicated methods and techniques of treatment which lead to a high level of psychological health, a private, quiet, and comfortable place is required.

Meditation practice. The meditation practice is a part of the meditation process. It is discussed separately for the sake of clarity of description. Several types of methods and techniques of meditation practice exist. Examples are inhalation and exhalation (Ānāpānasati), reciting a particular word or phrase (Parikamma), moving the body and mind (Satipatthāna), concentrating on an object or sight (Kasina). These groups may also be sub-divided. Various methods and techniques are suggested due to individual differences in personality, and thefact that personalities change over time. People's psychological problems vary with the time, age, situation, environment, and culture. Therefore, the application of these methods and techniques must be very flexible.

Ordinarily, meditation should be practised under a guide. The meditators should be emotionally stable. However, there are some methods of meditation practice that can be

undertaken by the individual, at any time, in any place, and in every situation. These methods of practice are outlined below:

Meditation in movement.

"What is the cause of the effect?"

"What are the outcomes of the causal influence?"

"What are the facts of the situation?"

People should always keep these questions in mind while engaging in everyday activities. Awareness of the above questions tends to lessen nervousness, fear, anxiety, anger, excitement, delusion, and restlessness. Conze (1959) stated that according to the Buddhist scripture, meditation in movement brings about a high level of psychological health (p. 136).

Concentrating meditation (Samatha Bhāvanā). The first step of this meditation practice is to choose an object--a rose, a picture, a doll, anything one likes. It is then necessary to concentrate at will on it for a long period of time, to maintain unswerving attention without the intrusion of other thoughts. Once this power is developed, the length and depth of concentrating thought advances. The concentrating thought is the prerequisite for the achievement of the "no thought."

Breathing meditation. The meditator consciously observes his breathing. The methods of practice are suggested as follows:

> Breathing in a long breath, he knows, "I breathe in a long breath." Breathing out a short breath, he knows, "I breathe out a short breath." Conscious of the whole (breath)-body, "I shall breathe out," thus he trains himself. Calming the bodily function (of breathing), "I shall breathe in," thus he trains himself (Canon, Nyanaponika, 1969, p. 118).

Care must be taken not to force the pace. Words may be recited while breathing in and out. For example, counting the number of breaths or repeating the words that convey the meaning of the emotion that one wishes to feel are common practice.

This breathing practice is different from the yogic forced breathing practice. The latter is quite harmful without an expert guide. When correctly practised, the former exercise should relieve anxiety, restlessness, or insomnia. It is a practical method of calming down when feeling tense. Since it has a variety of applications, it could be practised by anyone, in any place, and in every situation, including annoying and frustrating moments.

Loving kindness meditation (Mettā). The English expression "loving kindness" does not convey the full meaning of the Buddhist term (Mettā). This is the active goodwill that radiates within oneself and to others in the universe. Loving kindness in its ideal form is similar to the love of a mother towards her only son. Two methods of the practice are described:

> And he lets his mind pervade one quarter of the world with thoughts of love, and so the second, and so the third, and so the fourth. And thus the whole wide world, above, below, around and everywhere, does he continue to pervade with heart of love, far reaching, grown great, and beyond measure (Canon, Davids, 1926, p. 149).

People refresh their memory with this formula:

> Visible or invisible, living far or near, already born or about to be born, let them all be happy minded (Canon, Mettā Sutta, Swamy, 1974, p. 39).

With adequate amounts of practice, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity develop. Compassion is sympathetic sorrow. It is the quality of understanding oneself and others when in a lost, hopeless state. Sympathetic joy (Mettā) refers to an individual's feeling of joy when he or his friends succeed. Equanimity or evenmindedness (Upekkhā) is a calm detachment, a restoration of the mind's impersonal serenity. This is the quality of kindness and warm concern without attachment. It is not selfish indifference to personal welfare and the welfare of others. Its probable cause is seeing how each person belongs to the continuity of his own action.

The practice of loving kindness prevents the following psychological problems: self-hatred, hatred of others, bias, prejudice, self-pity, the lack of concentrated thought, the lack of understanding of others, poor human relationships and disharmony of living in society. This practice is highly recommended to those whose jobs are concerned with helping relationships--counselors, doctors, and social workers.

Conclusion on meditation approach. Meditation is applicable to people of all ages, cultures, and eras. It is a large field of study in theory and practice. It is beyond the scope of this study to discuss it in detail, and further study is recommended. The correct practice of meditation has

tremendous psychological health values. To conclude this section, an excerpt from the writings on meditation by Nyanaponika Thera (1969) is quoted:

> This ancient way of mindfulness (meditation) is as practicable to-day as it was 2,500 years ago. It is as applicable in the lands of the West as in the East; in the midst of life's turmoil as well as in the peace of the monk's cell.
>
> Right mindfulness (right meditation) is in fact, the indispensable bases of right living and right thinking--everywhere, at any time, for everyone. It has a vital message for all: not only for the confirmed followers of the Buddha, and his doctrine (Dhamma), but for all who endeavour to master the mind that is so hard to control and who earnestly wish to develop its latent faculties of greater strength and greater happiness (pp.7-8).

THE CURE FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTURBANCE

The first section of chapter three dealt with the methods and techniques employed to promote psychological health. These involved the readiness to cope with psychological suffering, and are similar to physical hygiene.

The second section focuses on methods and techniques to cure psychological disturbance. The discussion is limited to the following topics: basic principles for the application of methods and techniques, location of therapy, the therapist, types of therapy, and family therapy.

Basic Principles for the Application of Methods and Techniques

The methods and techniques of therapy must be flexible and eclectic. This is due to the fact that an individual's problems stem from various causes and depend on environment, personality type, culture, age, and values. These dependent

factors are dominated by the law of continuous change and impermanence. The methods and techniques may be categorized into two major groups--directive and non-directive. Their purpose is to achieve insight (Paññña) and the acceptance and awareness of insight (Sati-Sampajaññña).

Insight refers to a person's recognition of his problems and solution to them, and understanding of the nature of life (see Chapter II; Theory of Man). These two factors overlap and reinforce each other. Two principles are basic to the facilitation of the occurence of insight: a calm state of mind for the disturbed person, and the comprehension of the original causes of suffering.

The primary goal of therapy is to calm and relax the disturbed person. Therapy could hardly proceed without attainment of this first objective. Once the person reaches a calm state of mind, insight should occur. Insight may be "a new learning experience," "a recalled insight," or "a recalled awareness."

Buddhist psychology stresses that the various types of disturbed behavior originate from three related causes: uncontrolled anger and the anger of which the individual is unaware (Dosa), uncontrolled desires (Lobha), and ignorance (Moha). Each one may dominate the others in different periods, and may be expressed in various ways. For Example, "Dosa" may result in revengefulness, hatred, aggression, self-pity, self-punishment, or attention-getting actions.

The acceptance and awareness of insight (Sati-

Sampajañña) refers to the insight that is so conditioned that it becomes integrated into one's feeling, thinking, and acting. The occurance of insight which is not conditioned appears to be useless. Various conditioning techniques may be applied during and outside the therapeutic period. The most simple and popular ones are the reflection and repetition techniques (Parikamma). Many methods are employed within the scope of the reflection and repetition techniques, including direct and indirect methods. The above discussion may be clarified by the following example:

Mr. A. is a drug addict. He gains "insight" that his narcotic addiction is harmful, since it causes personal and family problems. He therefore wants to give up the drugs. The therapist reflects the ideas that drugs are harmful, they cause unhappiness to his family, and that if he is determined he will be able to quit. The therapist also lets Mr. A. reflect and repeat these ideas himself. (This is a conditioning technique--repetition and reflection.) The conditioning technique should be continued by the client by himself and with the help of the members of his family. Assuming continuous use of this procedure, the prognosis is good; i.e. Mr. A. will gradually renounce the use of narcotics.

The focus of therapy is on the present, the "here and now," Buddhist doctrines emphasize that man reaps what he sows. His present being is the result of his earlier behavior and experience, and is the cause of his future being. However, neither the past nor the future is the main focus of therapy.

The present is all-important. Humphreys (1959) translated the following verse from the Buddhist Canon into English:

> Do not hark back to things that passed,
> And for the future cherish not fond hopes:
> The past was left behind by thee,
> The future state has yet to come.
>
> But who with vision clear can see
> The present which is here and now
> Such a wise one should aspire to win
> What never can be lost nor shaken.
>
> (p. 103).

Location of Therapy

Therapy may be done in various places--the home, the office, the classroom, the hospital, the temple, or the garden. The choice of a location depends on the circumstances. However, privacy usually is recommended.

The Therapist

Therapists act as educators who apply methods and techniques which lead the individual to be aware of and to accept their insights. They need not necessarily call themselves "therapists," but they must play the therapist's role, i.e., to understand the human nature and to be concerned about and willing to help a person who is afflicted with psychological problems. Often remuneration is not demanded. For this reason, the word "client" is avoided in this paper.

Types of Therapy

The various types of therapy may be categorized into four major groups which are even further sub-divided.

The classification is based on the patterns of therapeutic relationship. These groups are as follows:

1. Self-psychotherapy, in which an individual is his own therapist.

2. Individual therapy which involves a one-to-one relationship.

3. Group psychotherapy with every member acting as a therapist, e.g., peer group therapy, career group therapy.

Certain kinds of therapy may be classified under more than one type. For example, family therapy may be individual or group.

Family Therapy

Because the family is the source of many personal and social problems, the most effective therapy often occurs in the context of the family. Family therapy refers to the therapy that is carried out by the members of a family, although in some cases the assistance of a therapist may be required. This discussion of family therapy is limited to the cure for the sorrow due to the death of a loved one.

When a loved one is going to die, the members of the family are advised to talk about death so that they may learn to accept the fact that death is a natural phenomenon, that physical matter is impermanent, and that birth and death are inseparable. When the family members feel very tense, a therapist usually is required. If the dying person feels emotionally secure, it is suggested that he should listen and

participate in the "talk." The rationale for this method is based on the fact that if death is accepted as a natural phenomenon, the dying person's fear of death and the sorrow of his family members may be substantially reduced. This fact is affirmed by a story from the Canon:

Kisāgotamī and the Mustard Seed

A woman dove-eyed, young with tearful face
And lifted hands--saluted, bending low:
'Lord, Thou art he, she said, 'Who yesterday
Had pity on me in the fig-grove here,
Where I live lone and reared my child; but he
Straying amid the blossoms found a snake,
Which twined about his wrist, whilst he did laugh
And tense the quick-forked tongue and open mouth
Of that cold playmate. But, alas! ere long
He turned so pale and still, I could not think
Why he should cease to play and let my breast
Fall from his lips. And one said, "He is sick
Of poison", and another, "He will die."
But I, who could not lose my precious boy,
Prayed of them physic, which might bring the light
Back to his eyes; it was so very small
That kiss-mark of the serpent, and I think
It could not hate him, gracious as he was,
Not hurt him in his sport. And some one said,
"There is a holy man upon the hill-
Lo! now he passeth in the yellow robe-
Ask if the rishi if there be a cure
For that which ails thy son. "Whereon I came
Trembling to thee, whose brow is like a god's
And wept and draw the face cloth from my babe,
Praying Thee tell what simplest might be good,
And Thou, great sir! didst spurn me not, but gaze
With gentle eyes and touch with patient hand;
Then drew the face cloth back, saying to me,
"Yea, little sister, there is that might heal
Thee first and him, if thou couldst fetch the thing;
For they who seek physicians bring to them
What is ordained. Therefore I pray thee, find
Black mustard-seed, a tola; only mark
Thou take it not from any hand or house
Where a father, mother, child or slave hath died;
It shall be well if thou canst find such seed."
Thus didst thou speak, my Lord!
The Master smiled
Exceeding tenderly. "Yea, I speak thus,
Dear Kisāgotami! But didst thou find
The seed?
'I went, Lord, clasping to my breast

The babe, grown colder, asking at each hut-
Here in the jungle and towards the town-
"I pray you give me mustard of your grace,
A tola-black;" and each who had it gave,
For all the poor are piteous to the poor;
But when I asked, "In my friend's household here
Hath any preadventure ever died-
Husband or wife or child or slave?" they said:
"O, sister! What is this you ask? the dead
Are very many, and the living few!"
So with sad thanks I gave the mastard back
And prayed of others; but the others said
"Here is the seed but we have lost our slave!"
"Here is the seed, but our good man is dead!"
"Here is the seed, but he that sowed it died
Between the rain-time and the harvesting!"
Ah, Sir! I could not find a single house
Where there was mustard seed and none had died!
Ah, Sir! I could not find a single house.
Therefore, I left my child, who would not suck
Nor smile, beneath the wild vines by the stream
To seek thy face and kiss thy feet, and pray
Where I might find this seed and find no death,
If now indeed my baby be not dead,
As I do fear, and as they said to me.'
My sister! thou has found, the Master said,
Searching for what none finds--that bitter balm
I had to give thee. He thou lovedst slept
Dead on thy bosom yesterday: today
Thou know'st the whole wide world weeps with thy woe;
The grief which all hearts share grows less for one.
Lo! I would pour my blood if it could stay
Thy tears and win the secret of that curse
Which makes sweet love our anguish and which drives
O'er flowers and pastures to the sacrifice-
As these dumb beasts are driven--men their lords.
I seek that secret; bury thou thy child!

(Canon, Sir Arnold Edwin, Humphreys, 1961, p. 85.)

The methods and techniques used to cure psychological conflicts are described in the Athakathādhammapada section of the Buddhist Canon. Here, the basic philosophy, theory, methods, and techniques, as well as the illustrations, are presented in great detail.

SUMMARY

The basic themes of Buddhist therapeutic aspects are the realization that suffering is an integral part of life, the knowledge of the causes of suffering, the understanding that there is an end to suffering, and the practising of methods and techniques to prevent, minimize, and eliminate suffering. Briefly, Buddhism concerns suffering and its solution. Davids' comments on this feature of Buddhism, quoted by Humphreys (1962):

> Buddhism is therefore, to some extent, a philosophy of suffering. If life is filled with suffering, and if suffering is the means by which we learn to put an end to suffering, is it not foolish to attempt to run away from school? Rather should we suffer willingly the consequences of our thoughts and acts in order that we may be free. If the doctrine of suffering is stressed in Buddhism, there is good reason for this emphasis. Although the doctrine is, taken by itself, an extreme view, it provides when considered in conjunction with the complementary doctrine of deliverance, a philosophy all sufficient for the immediate needs of men (p. 84).

The methods and techniques for the promotion of psychological health (general and specific) include the building up of psychological resistance, a form of will power, or psychological strength which helps an individual to cope with the daily suffering of life.

Curative methods and techniques of therapy must be eclectic and flexible since both the individual and his environment are governed by the law of continuous change and impermanence.

In Buddhist theory, insight alone does not lead to

the solution of psychological problems. Insight and intelligence are means to an end but not an end in themselves. A problem may be solved only when insight into problems and the ways to solve them occurs during therapy. This insight is conditioned and results in an individual's acceptance and awareness of it, both inside and outside the therapeutic period. In other words, the effective insight is the one that is absorbed into a person's way of thinking, feeling, and acting.

Buddhist therapy deals with various kinds of psychological treatment for people of every age group, intelligence level, and personality type.

The goals of Buddhist therapy are to prevent and to cure daily suffering--lamentation, disappointment, reorganization of self, sorrow, pain, or fear. Therapy is therefore an integral part of everyday living. In other words, Buddhist therapy is a life-long therapy.

Achievement in therapy is categorized into two levels, mundane and super-mundane. The mundane level leads to the temporary end of suffering. The super-mundane level is the permanent end to suffering. It is an advanced stage of physchological achievement. Therefore, it may be attained only after an individual is able to attain the mundane level. Leading a life of extreme self-mortification or self-indulgence in sensual pleasure both are forbidden in Buddhism. Psychological comfort, mundane and super-mundane, is the consequence of leading a life of moderation. The stage of constant

psychological health (the super-mundane level) may be attained through the gradual development processes of psychological growth, and through many cycles of rebirth (See chapter II, the wheel of life, and the concept of rebirth). The following words are quoted from the Buddha:

> Just as, Brethen, the mighty ocean deepens and slopes gradually down, hollow after hollow, not plunging by a sudden precipe, even so, Brethen, in this Dhamma-Discipline the training is gradual, it goes step by step; there is no sudden penetration of insight (Canon, Burns, 1966, p. 12).

In conclusion, the philosophy, theory, methods and techniques of Buddhist psychotherapy constitute an extremely large field of study. Since a complete account cannot be provided in this limited paper, further study is recommended for those who are interested.

CHAPTER IV

THERAPEUTIC APPROACHES IN EXISTENTIALISM

> Existential psychotherapy is the movement which, although standing on one side on the scientific analysis owed chiefly to the genius of Freud, also brings back into the picture the understanding of man on the deeper and broader level--man as the being who is human. It is based on the assumption that it is possible to have a science of man which does not fragmentize man and destroy his humanity at the same moment as it studies him. It unites science and ontology. It is not too much to say, thus, that we are here not merely discussing a new method as over against other methods, to be taken or left or to be absorbed into some vague catch-all eclecticism.
>
> (May, 1959, p. 36.)

Existentialism is a school of Western philosophy. Its central theme is a non-systematic explanation of life and man. The roots of this school of philosophy may be traced back to ancient Greece. It started to flourish on the European continent during the 19th century, and is still continuing to develop. As a consequence of the industrial revolution society became more bureaucratic and technological, imposing a pattern of life and thought on the European people which featured personal estrangement, neglect of the quality of being human, and the regarding of other individuals as objects or machines. It is not possible to identify a founder of this school of philosophy since it is an accumulative contribution of thoughts from many European thinkers at different periods of time. Existential thoughts are expressed

in various fields of knowledge. May (1959) states:

> Existentialism, . . . is shown in almost all aspects of our culture. It is found not only in psychology and philosophy but in art, vide Van Gogh, Cezanne, and Picasso in literature, vide Dostoevski, Baudelaire, Kafka, and Rilke. Indeed, in many ways it is the unique and specific portrayal of the psychological predicament of contemporary Western man. This cultural movement, as we shall see later in detail, has its roots in the same historical situation and the same psychological crises which called forth psychoanalysis and other forms of psychotherapy (p. 11).

In this chapter the discussion is centered around existential psychotherapy. The following topics are treated: a short definition of existential psychotherapy, the existential theory of man, therapeutic goals, the therapeutic relationship, therapeutic methods and techniques, and the therapist.

EXISTENTIAL PSYCHOTHERAPY

Existential psychotherapy is not a systematic therapy but an attitude towards therapy. There are many schools of psychotherapy which are considered to be existential schools, among which are Sartre's analysis, Binswanger analysis and Frankl's Logotherapy. The basic concerns of each of these schools are the nature of man's existence, man's experience of the world, and the uniqueness of man (especially the uniqueness of the particular man seated before the therapist during the therapeutic hour). This paper does not deal with any particular school of American existential psychotherapy. Among these various schools there are conflicts,

differences, and commonalities in philosophy, theory and practice. Only the major commonalities of the topics stated above are discussed in this paper.

THE EXISTENTIAL THEORY OF MAN

The existential view of man is not a scientific explanation. It is a series of attitudes towards life and man. The main tenets of this view are briefly stated below:

1. Man is not an object, nor a machine, nor a product of mass production. Each individual is unique. He is a being of dignity and worth. He should be treated as he would like to be treated by others. Beck (1963) in his discussion on existential view on man states:

> Man must be subject, not object. This theory is the only one which gives man dignity and worth. Each man must be treated as an experiencing being worthy of being treated as one himself desires to be treated, for he is part of proprium of his brother (p. 114).

2. Man is not a static thing. He is in the process of emerging, of becoming something new. He is like a traveller who is always travelling to somewhere. He is in the process of becoming a new person consciously and unconsciously. Because he is not a "fixed thing" he is more than he knows and he can know. His being is not something given once and for all, but is constantly changing and developing. He makes choices while he is emerging. His unhappiness is a consequence of his inability to make the vital choice. Therefore, in regard to the emerging process of a human being, it would be inaccurate to analyze a person in terms of theory.

Sartre (1956) says:

> If we consider man as capable of being analyzed and reduced to original data, to determined drives (or 'desires'), supported by the subject as properties of an object, we may indeed end up with an imposing system of substances which we may then call mechanisms or dynamisms or patterns. But we find ourselves up against a dilemma. Our human being has become a sort of indeterminate clay which would have to receive (the desires) passively or he would be reduced to a simple bundle of these irreducible drives or tendencies. In either case the man disappears; we can no longer find the one to whom this or that experience has happened (p. 561).

3. There are some parts of man that cannot be analyzed, and understood by scientific methods and techniques.

Mitchell (1964) states:

> The distrust of science as the tool for knowing man is a universal among the existential thinkers. Binswanger especially reflects this in his critique of the limitations of the scientific method as a medium for understanding the psychological dimensions of human life (p. 157).

4. Man is what he makes himself. Heredity, environment, upbringing, and culture are alibis. Sartre (1957) states: "Man is nothing else but what he makes himself. Such is the first principle of existentialism (p. 15)." Man can be what he will. External influences are limiting but not determining. There are, however, limits to life, to being, which must be accepted.

5. Man lives in the three dimensions of time--the past, the present, and the future. Man has the capacity to transcend the immediate situation, to rise above his past, to transcend himself. The future is the significant tense for human beings because they are always in the process of emerging, of becoming something new. The mature person is

the one who lives with the immediate experience, the here and now or the present situation. Real life can only be lived to-day, not yesterday, nor tomorrow.

6. Human beings differ from all other animals in their capacity for being aware of (conscious of) themselves, as well as of the events that influence them, and of the past, present and future as a continuum. This capacity "to be aware" influences man's decision making. May (1963) explains:

> Self-consciousness itself--the person's potential for awareness that the vast complex, protean flow of experience--brings in inescapably the element of decision at every moment (p. 78).

7. Man is a unity with three aspects of dimensions. These are the somatic, or physical; the mental, or psychological; and the spiritual. The first two are closely related and together constitute the "psychophysicum." They include inherited and constitutional factors, such as the innate drives. Existentialism, especially the Logotherapy school, emphasizes the third dimension of man, the spiritual. It is stated that spirituality is the first of the three characteristics of human existence which distinguish man from animals. In regard to this unity, man should be studied in his total whole.

8. Man is free. Freedom is human dignity. A person who considers himself as such, could maintain such spiritual freedom, even under threatening circumstances. Frankl (1962) states:

> It is this spiritual freedom--which cannot be taken

> away--that makes life meaningful and powerful. If there is a meaning to life, there is a meaning to suffering, since suffering, like death, is an ineradicable part of life; without them life cannot be complete (p. 66).

It is man's essence which always decides what he will be in the next instant. Freedom means freedom in the face of three things: the instincts, inherited disposition, and environment.

9. Man is influenced by all of these, but he has freedom to accept or reject, and to make decisions. While he is not free from conditions, he is free to take a stand towards these conditions. Upon man's freedom hinges his identity; man is the sum of his choices. If man chooses not to choose, he fails to recognize his freedom and negates his identity. This is the condition known in existential terms as the "existential vacuum". Man, then, does not simply exist; he decides what his existence will be. Since he can rise above biological, psychological, and sociological conditions, on which predictions can be based, he is not completely predictable.

10. Man's freedom and responsibility are inseparable. Man's freedom is not only freedom from, but freedom to responsibility. Man is responsible to himself (his existence), his society, and his conscience (his spiritual dimension). Existential philosophy emphasizes that responsibility and vital choices would occur only when man has the opportunity to be free (Dreyfus, 1966, p. 420).

11. The mature man must be an existential-creative person. Existential creativity implies flexibility of

attitude, feeling, and behaviour in authentic response to the real situations. He can be serious, gay, or detached according to the challenge of the situation. He adopts none of these attitudes compulsively--his behavior is not identical in different situations.

12. Man's existence is prior to his essence. The essence of each individual is different and varies with time due to his experiences in life and his emerging processes. Each individual is not a carbon copy cut from social pressure and norms but is unique, singular, and irreplaceable, and thus significant. Men do not share a common essence. There is no universal essence which may be termed human nature. In Sartre's (1947) opinion: "It is impossible to find in every man some universal essence which would be human nature, yet there does exist a universal human condition (p. 45)." Consequently, there are different ways of living richly and well, and each individual should continue to develop throughout his life in his own unique way. Mitchell (1964) comments that the awareness of the human's uniqueness or individuality, which is stressed in existentialism, has contributed insights into individual human existence which allow a much greater understanding of the human being (p. 161).

13. Man lives in three worlds simultaneously--the Umwelt, or the biological world without self-awareness, the Mitwelt, or the world of interrelationships or encounters with other persons involving mutual awareness, and the Eigenwelt, or the world of self-identity or being in itself.

Man actualizes himself, or fulfills his inner potentialities, by continual participation in a world of things and events, and always in encounters or dialogue with other men. Some qualities of being can be distinctly developed only in relation to another person. Therapy is an encounter or a dialogue in which the patient is enabled to develop certain human qualities.

14. The world of man is the world of meaning. Frankl (1955) emphasizes that the primary motivation in man is not the "will-to-pleasure" or "the will-to-power," but the "will to meaning." It is the will to meaning which most deeply inspires man, which is the most human phenomenon of all, since an animal certainly never worries about the meaning of its existence (p. X). The meaning of life is unique for each individual due to his role, intelligence, and personality type. It varies with time due to the sum of his choices, his experiences, and his emerging process. Man is seeking for importance within himself. His meaning determines his importance. His existence is guided in his search for meaning. Frankl (1961) also states: "Man is ready and willing to shoulder any suffering as soon as, and as long as, he can see a meaning in it (p. 435)."

Meaning, to a degree, is determined by cultural and environmental background--the views of parents, the views of the majority, and the views of those who are in authority. These views, in turn, reflect the cultural values of the civilization in which a person lives. Man consciously and

unconsciously assumes the meaning that these various forces have placed upon certain actions. This restriction of meaning is a necessary part of society. The healthy individual accepts and goes beyond it. The neurotic is more apt to be limited to culturally and environmentally imposed meaning. His anxieties and fears deprive him of the freedom to discover meaning, and he thinks and acts as he is expected by his culture and others.

15. Anxiety and guilt are inevitable in human existence. The existentialists see them as the price to be paid for being human. Anxiety involves a conflict between being and non-being, between the emerging potentiality of being, on the one hand, and the loss of present security on the other. It is a concomitant of freedom. Sartre (1957) states that because man's existence precedes his essence, he exists before his purpose is achieved. However, this fact places man in continuous conflict. He faces anxiety and anguish because he is forever free to make choices. With each choice he stakes his future. As he is never sure of the correctness of his choices, man is in a perpetual state of crises (p. 17). Guilt is a failure to fulfill one's potentiality. The mature man must be able to be aware of and accept the tragic parts of life. Anxiety and guilt have various causes, since:

a. Man does not have a full knowledge of his world and his self (as he always emerges to become something new).

b. There is a limitation to life. Man makes choices within this limitation. Therefore, his choices are not always correct and effective.

c. Man's world of meaning emerges and changes in accordance with his becoming process. This causes feelings of confusion and conflict.

d. Man is occasionally disabled by sickness and injury. In such a situation he may lose his existential freedom (freedom to choose), and thus gains anxiety and guilt.

e. Man is basically free. However, he cannot feel free all the time because he lives in society. Various forces in the society (e.g. cultural forces, role demanding) limit and deprive him of his basic freedom. He is therefore struggling to hold this freedom. The consequence is anxiety and guilt.

f. Man knows and is aware of his termination--non-being or death.

16. Being implies the fact of non-being, and the meaning of existence involves the fact of non-existence. Existentialist thinkers hold that death gives life reality; it is the one absolute fact of life. Man is aware of the fact that he must die, and he must confront this fact. Arbuckle (1965) states:

> The free man of the existentialist, the human who is never merely a victim of a predetermined culture, the person-in-being who is the maker of his values, this man, being free to live, is also free to die, and it would seem that no person can really be free to live if he is afraid to die (p. 566.)

Freedom to die is not an individual's means of escaping from the pessimistic or tragic parts of life, but is a willingness to accept death while it is happening to himself or others whom he loves.

THERAPEUTIC GOALS

Existential therapy has several goals. Some of the major objectives are described below:

1. To enable a person to cope with everyday guilt and anxiety.

Certain forms of anxiety and guilt are normal and unavoidable parts of human existence. A person seeks therapy because he cannot face or cope with his anxiety and guilt alone. The therapeutic aim is to enable the patient to have or regain the strength to confront the pessimistic parts of life. The basic tenet of existential psychotherapy is that anxiety and guilt faced is not defeat but conquest. Van Kaam (1962) states that the outcome of existential psychotherapy should be an individual's ability to cope with the normal anxiety and guilt of everyday life. The patient should be able to accept the bright and the shady sides of life (pp. 403-404).

2. To help an individual grasp his basic freedom and as a consequence, make effective and responsible choices. As is understood in existential thought, freedom is inseparable from responsibility.

Man is basically free. He asks for therapy partly

because at that moment he cannot feel free, having lost his basic freedom. This loss may be caused by the demands of the culture and authoritative figures, or by intense feeling such as anger, sorrow, or fear. The therapeutic aim is, therefore, to help an individual to regain his basic freedom. Once he can feel free he can make effective choices, and is willing to shoulder the responsibilities which follow his choices. The degree of effectiveness of the choices is in accordance with the degree of his freedom.

3. To enable a person to maintain his spiritual freedom.

An individual usually loses his spiritual freedom (psychological strength, or will-power) when he is in threatening situations. He feels disturbed, frustrated, and irritated. The aim of existential psychotherapy is to help a person to retain or to build up spiritual freedom under these situations (see section on human nature). Van Kaam (1966) explains: "Suffering is still present, is still painful, yet it does not disturb his inner freedom (p. 183)."

4. To help the patient in his search for the meaning of his existence.

The world of man is the world of meaning. A failure to see the value of existence results in the state of non-being (the existential vacuum). This produces a great deal of psychological discomfort. Therapy is a human encounter in which a person has the opportunity to search for meaning to his existence.

5. To help the individual find the meaning behind

his suffering.

Man suffers in his search for, in his striving towards, and in his maintenance of his world of meaning. The world of meaning is fluid, not static. The therapeutic goal is therefore to enable an individual to forbear suffering in his search for it, or for a change of meaning (due to the circumstances of his present being). The purpose of this forbearance is to enable him to see the meaning of his suffering (as a person is willing to suffer if he understands the reasons for it).

6. To enable a person to realize and be aware of his individuality.

Individuality is the prime stress of existential psychotherapy. Loss of the sense of individuality results in a loss of self-identity. It is undeniable that when in physical and psychological anguish, self-identity is of prime importance. Therefore, the aim of therapy is to enable the patient to realize and be aware of his unique individuality.

7. To enable a person to live with his present mode of being, the here and now state of existence.

The prime concern of existential psychotherapy is the therapeutic encounter, the present mode of being of the patient. The past mode of being can no longer be changed, and the future has not yet come. Reality is the present existence that the individual is facing and living. The therapist is expected to enable the patient to realize and be

aware of his present mode of being. Van Kaam (1962) states:

> The counselee is not encouraged to escape his present by flight into a past, where there are no decisions to make and where there is no necessity to shape freely a world of "here and now", where existence seems determined and explained by inescapable needs. Instead of forcing the client to revise the fixed history of his past, the counselor invites him to face his situation today, not to excuse himself but to return to his world in a new mode of being, to accept its challenge (p. 403).

To summarize, existential psychotherapy aims at educating and encouraging individuals who feel psychological discomfort to regain the strength required to cope with life through the medium of existential philosophy. Its purpose is to release the individual from a state of psychological disturbance by directed use of his freedom, choice, responsibility, and sense of personal identity.

THERAPEUTIC RELATIONSHIP

The therapeutic relationship is the interaction between or among human beings with the purpose of a cure for psychological disturbance for those who need it and search for it. Existentialists label this relationship "encounter."

The relationship is based on the existential views of man (see existential theory of man). The therapist has a sincere concern towards the psychological well-being of others. He regards them as human beings of dignity and worth who are capable of making choices. The patients feel that they need the therapy. Without the human-to-human relationship (the encounter), therapy cannot proceed. (Thera-

peutic relationship is hardly separated from therapeutic methods and techniques).

The existential practitioners believe that a key factor of psychological problems in the technological, mobile society is a lack of brotherly love, human relationship and human understanding. Therefore, through the medium of human warmth and man-to-man relationship (the encounter) man is enabled to release himself from psychological conflicts. Frankl (1960) describes:

> This human relationship between two persons is what seems to be the most significant aspect of the psychotherapeutic process, a more important factor than any method and techniques (p. 520).

THERAPEUTIC METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

The therapeutic methods and techniques employed by the existential-oriented therapists are called the phenomenological method.

The human being is in a process of becoming and emerging. He is unique and his uniqueness or individuality is dynamic. Therefore, the therapeutic methods and techniques must be a process--unique, eclectic, and flexible.

The therapeutic methods and techniques are governed by the therapist's underlying philosophy of existential psychotherapy. The philosophy of existential psychotherapy, in turn, emerges from and in many ways is symbiotic with the existential theory of man (see theory of man).

The understanding of the patient as he exists in the

world is the basis of the methods and techniques. The methods and techniques follow this understanding--they do not precede it. May (1959) states: "Understanding first and technique second," or, "Technique follows understanding." An overconcern about methods and techniques is undesirable since this emphasis always goes along with the tendency to see the human being as an object or machine to be calculated, managed, analyzed, and manipulated. This prevents the understanding of a human being as a human being.

THE THERAPIST

The discussion of the existential therapeutic approach has dealt with the nature of man, therapeutic goals, the therapeutic relationship, and therapeutic methods and techniques. The key factor of existential psychotherapy however, is the therapist. The therapist is the one who absorbs the existential views of man into his ways of life--thinking, feeling, acting, and interacting with other individuals. He must respect his individuality and be creative and adaptive. Landsman (1965) comments:

> Perhaps the greatest promise is the increasing emphasis upon the self of the counselor and his enrichment in training rather than upon the mechanics of his techniques . . . Thus existentialist must summon hypotheses concerning the development of the counselor's self (p. 573).

SUMMARY COMMENTS

Existential psychotherapy is not a system of psychotherapy but an attitude towards psychotherapy. There are

various schools of psychotherapy labelled "existential." Differences, conflicts, and commonalities are found among these schools. The existential school of psychotherapy is an American product even though it has its roots in the European continent. May (1963) states:

> We propose here that the existential approach, recast and re-born into our American language and thought forms, can and will give this underlying structure (p. 75).

The existential view of man is a non-systematic, non-scientific explanation of life and of man. Man's existence is prior to his essence. Each essence is unique and varies with time as man is in the process of emerging and becoming. Anxiety and guilt are the price that a person must pay for being human. He lives in the world of meaning, and is therefore different from the world of other beings. He is not merely an object, nor machine, rather his being consists of various aspects. Man is more than a bundle of flesh and bone and muscle and likewise more than a set of problems or behaviors, or physical difficulties. He is a total complex being, he is living and emerging now, and he is a fellow human of worth, value, and dignity.

Existential psychotherapy is centered on man. It is rooted in a theory of man conceptualized by various European thinkers (e.g. Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, and Sartre). Its emphasis is on the importance, the dignity, the value, the freedom, the choices, and responsibility of each person. Understanding the present mode of being-in-the-world, the

patients' world of reality, underlies therapeutic methods and techniques. Therefore, there are no set systematic methods and techniques in this approach to psychotherapy. May (1959) states that methods and techniques are flexible and versatile, varying from one patient to another and from one phase to another in the treatment of the same patient. It depends on what is necessary to best reveal or illuminate the patient's present mode of being in his world.

In the bureaucratic, technological society there is a tendency to regard man as an object or machine, to study man as part rather than as whole. The existentialist protests this tendency. Existential psychotherapy is, therefore, an attempt to treat persons who are experiencing stress and indecision by means of non-rigid methods and techniques. Existential psychotherapists hold that rigid systematic methods and techniques could be effective in dealing with objects and machines, but not with human beings. Dreyfus (1966) explains:

> To be concerned with technique and its development is the antithesis to what the Existential approach stands for. The Existential point of view maintains that man is not a machine to be operated upon in order to gain a particular effect. Techniques imply manipulation; one manipulates objects, not people (p. 418.)

The therapist is the most important factor in psychotherapy as he creates the therapeutic relationship. The therapeutic relationship is, in turn, a key factor of the therapeutic processes. His knowledge of philosophy, theory, method and technique of psychotherapy are secondary to his

view of man which has been absorbed into his whole personality in the course of his feeling, thinking, acting, and interacting with other human individuals. He must be a creative and adaptive person. A challenging question for practitioners of existential psychotherapy is the method of training potential psychotherapist as such.

Existential philosophy has as its central theme the attitude towards life and man which has been transformed to be the base of existential psychotherapy (an attempt to cure the emotionally disturbed person through the medium of existential philosophy). The views on life and man of this school are optimistic, and pessimistic; strengthening, and frightening. Therefore, existential psychotherapy does not suit all those who are in the state of crisis and indecision. Nor can every psychotherapist be the "existential" psychotherapist, since this school of therapy does require "specific characteristics" in the self of the practitioner. These "specific characteristics" are, for example, sufficent patience to work with people in distress with great respect towards them as human beings, sincere concern towards the psychological well-being of others, acquaintance with various therapeutic methods and techniques, and self-confidence in the flexible practice of these techniques.

Beck (1963) is quite optimistic concerning the growth of the existential school of psychotherapy on the American continent. He comments that this school of psychotherapy might revolutionize psychotherapy in philosophy, theory, and

practice. However, in viewing the pattern of the American society, this school has a very challenging future. In a society where machines play a major role in the way of life, creativity and adaptability are losing ground; the part is more important than the whole. Besides, the Western mind is so conditioned by scientific systematic knowledge that the scientific flexible one could move only slowly and with difficulty. Existential psychotherapy seems to be an opposite trend to the present structure of the American culture. Therefore, it would have to face many obstacles in its movement. It might require considerable refinement in order to become widely practised.

However, existential psychotherapy has a promising future. It might be the key answer for the cure of many psychological problems (personal and social) of a society which is characterized as mobile, technological, bureaucratic, and of the nuclear family. Such a social pattern brings out many psychological trends such as loneliness (which causes other psychological problems), the treatment of other human beings as objects or machines, a rigid systematic way of thinking, less concern towards the uniqueness of an individual, and the study of a human being in part, not as a total whole. Existential psychotherapy emphasizes brotherly love, the respect of a human being of worth and dignity, different from a machine or an object. This school makes an attempt to introduce a new way of thinking: that flexible scientific knowledge does exist and is effective in treating a human

being, a being who is unique and emerging. Therefore, in regard to the philosophy, theory, and practice of this school, it is probable to state that existential psychotherapy is a need in the American culture. It may not be the cure-all for the psychological problems in the American society, but it could prevent and heal many of them. Regretfully, not all aspects of existential psychotherapy can be included and elaborated on in detail in this paper. The writing of Landsman (1965) seems to be an appropriate ending to this chapter: "The tide of Existentialism is a favorable tide (p. 455)."

CHAPTER V

A COMPARISON--BUDDHIST AND EXISTENTIAL PSYCHOTHERAPY

> A difference, to be a difference, must make a difference.
>
> William James.

The aim of chapter V is to delineate as well as describe some of the similarities and differences in related therapeutic aspects (philosophies, theories, methods, and techniques) of Buddhist and existential psychotherapy. The comparison is based on the material discussed in chapters II, III and IV.

A theory of man with extensive roots in philosophical tradition in the base of both the Buddhist and existential therapeutic approaches. In both cases, the social environment of the period in which the psychotherapeutic methods developed governed the type of approaches that were ultimately employed. Buddhism originated in a wealthy agricultural society. The people in this society rarely suffered from estrangement from themselves, other individuals, and nature. They were thirsting for the understanding of man at the deepest level of his existence. They had a firm belief that the lack of understanding of man, as such, was the original cause of all facets of human suffering (for further clarification see e.g. Barth, 1914; Davids, 1926). American existentialism, on the other hand, was modified in North America in the late twentieth century by a society characterized by wealth, technology,

bureaucracy, and mobility. In this type of society people suffer from self-estrangement and alienation from other individuals. The concern of the society is with the mass rather than man, material gain as opposed to human relationships. A large number of people reacting against the above values seek therapy as a part of their search for human warmth, man-to-man interaction, individuality, and man's dignity. Existential therapy is a response to the needs of these individuals (for further clarification see e.g. May, 1959; Beck, 1963).

The relationship between existence and essence is a major focus of concern of both Buddhist and existential theories. Both state that the essence of man is not a single entity, but differs from one individual to another. Man's present mode of being is the sum of his choices and his past experience. The origin of the difference between the Buddhist and existential views of the relationship between existence and essence is in the Buddhist concept of rebirth. Buddhists hold the view that man's essence is not only the sum of his choices and experience in the present life, but also is a result of his action and experience in previous lives. While the Buddhists claim that an individual's essence exists (as an accumulation of his past experiences in his past life) prior to his existence in each rebirth, when his essence and existence are joined, the existentialists believe that the individual's existence begins at birth, and his essence then gradually develops.

Buddhist and existential psychotherapies both are a combination of science and ontology. The concept of "science"

is defined rather similarly by the practitioners of both schools. This term is not limited to reality in the world of objects and numerical figures, but also is extended to the world of the inner experiences and feelings of an individual, which are in a state of flux. Psychotherapy is centered on the process of the flow of man's feelings and experiences. Therefore, in dealing with this aspect of man, a flexible and eclectic manner is considered necessary in order to achieve effective results.

Man's future feelings and experiences cannot be completely known. The reality is the individual's feeling and experience, which are the sum of his past ones. Consequently, the here and now of man's feelings and experiences are the major focuses of the therapeutic processes of the two schools.

Buddhist and existential psychotherapies share the following common goals:

Both approaches strive to enable a person to confront or face the pessimistic parts of life. Both attempt to cure the psychological conflicts of people who are in stress and incapable of making decisions. Both approaches are concerned with helping a person to recover from the loss of his freedom and to see the meaning behind his suffering. Both groups desire to facilitate appropriate change through the emerging process of an individual. The existentialists make an effort to reach these objectives through the curative therapeutic process, whereas the Buddhists develop both the promotive

and the curative therapeutic processes. The promotive one is emphasized as more effective and less time-and energy-consuming.

Both the Buddhist and existential approaches place emphasis on the "self" of the therapist. Both schools stress the specific characteristics of the therapist (e.g. the kind concern towards others, the belief that an understanding of himself and other individuals must precede the use of therapeutic methods and techniques). These characteristics are considered to greatly facilitate the therapeutic relationship. The therapeutic relationship, in turn, is the key theme of the therapeutic processes. Whereas the Buddhist school has elaborated the means (such as loving kindness meditation) by which a therapist develops his helping characteristics, the existential one has not produced a formal system or method which will train the therapist to develop the desired personality traits.

Buddhists and existentialists both hold the view that man actualizes himself or fulfills his inner potentialities by continuous participation in a world of things and events, and by encounters or dialogues with other people. Therapy involves a specific form of interaction with people, objects, and events, through which the individual is able to develop certain human qualities and be released from psychological conflicts. Therefore, both schools develop man-to-man interaction. The Buddhists also include two additional types of therapeutic relationships: man-to-his self (e.g. meditation

practice), and man-to-concrete and abstract objects (e.g. man to meaningful pictures).

The therapeutic session is considered by the practitioners of both schools as the process through which man may be made aware of his freedom. While the existentialists center on a person-to-person relationship for the recovery from the loss of one's freedom, the Buddhists also include man-to-his-self interaction (e.g. meditation in movement and self-awareness practice).

Buddhist and existential concepts "freedom" are defined slightly differently. The Buddhist "freedom" refers to a calm state of mind, and is divided into many levels. The highest level is the "no thought" level. In existentialism, on the other hand, "freedom" is defined as the right of the individual to self-determination, his right to make his own decisions and choices. As in Buddhism, freedom implies responsibility. Man is responsible for his actions and his choices. He is responsible to himself, his fellow man, and his destiny. Unlike Buddhism, existentialism views man as responsible for his choices, his actions, and his destiny only in the present life.

Both Buddhists and existentialists are concerned with man's freedom, his capacity to be aware, his capacity to make choices, and his responsibility for his actions and destiny. The degree of his freedom determines man's capacity to be aware of himself and the events that influence him. The capacity and the degree of his awareness, in turn, affect

man's intellectual growth and reinforcement (insight), his decision-making, his actions, responsibilities, and destiny. Man has the potential to develop his awareness. Both Buddhists and existentialists have developed methods to enable the individual to obtain a high level of awareness. The existentialists, on the one hand, use various techniques in therapy sessions which help an individual to achieve awareness during the period and are intended to be generalized to daily life outside of therapy. The Buddhist techniques, on the other hand, are practised both in therapy and daily life. Reflecting the feelings of an individual is an example of a therapeutic technique which is employed by the practitioners of both schools, whereas meditation is an example of a method which Buddhists practise in daily living.

Both schools view life as suffering and are concerned with the means for bearing suffering. The existentialists confine suffering to guilt and anxiety, while the Buddhist concept of suffering refers to both physical and psychological discomforts including guilt, anxiety, sickness, pain, sorrow, disappointment, old age,and death. Both schools share the similar view that man's suffering is caused by his ignorance of his self and world. The existentialists hold the view that as there is a limitation to life and to being, this ignorance is unavoidable and man must learn to bear suffering. Slightly different from the existential views, the Buddhists explain that man's ignorance could be completely abolished,

and consequently, all facets of human's suffering would totally be eliminated. This process is, however, gradual, and man must pass through many cycles of rebirth before being able to achieve that stage.

The Buddhist and the existentialist thinkers share a similar principle that man's will motivates him to live and love life. The concept of will is, however, defined differently by the thinkers of the two schools. The existentialists explain it as man's meaning, while the Buddhists define it as man's desires. It is man's desire to live (consciously and unconsciously) that affects his existence after the physical death.

The thinkers of both schools believe that psychological suffering is the result of the conflict within man's will. This is inevitable, as man is constantly in the process of becoming. This process, in turn, is in response to his interaction with his changing self and environment. Therapy is the means through which man is enabled to be aware of this conflict and to adjust his will.

SUMMARY COMMENTS

> The two approaches are not at all to be identified. . . . they are on different levels.
>
> (May, 1959, p. 19.)

Buddhism and existentialism have many commonalities and differences in their content, direction, and level of psychotherapy. The differences distinguish the two schools: they are not identical.

Compared with existentialism, the Buddhist theory of man is a more systematic explanation of life both physically and psychologically. The Buddhist concept of "rebirth" seems to be the basis for the major differences in the theory of man of both schools. However, the number of commonalities between the views of man of these two schools is quite amazing. For example: both Buddhism and existentialism stipulate that man creates his own destiny, man is continually in the process of emerging to become a new individual, he is basically free, man can make an effective decision if he has an opportunity to be free, life and suffering are inseparable, and man must learn to bear, cope with, and eliminate suffering.

Buddhism and existentialism share many basic themes concerning the curative aspects of psychotherapy. They are, for example, the focus on the here and now experience of a person, the study of man who is emerging in his totality, the belief in flexible therapeutic methods and techniques. With regard to therapeutic directions, these two approaches are quite different. The Buddhist one places a great emphasis on methods and techniques designed to prevent psychological suffering, while the existential one is much more concerned with the cure for psychological conflicts. The existential approach centers on the cure for psychological problems which are seen as the by-products of an industrialized, technological society.

There are other commonalities and differences in the various therapeutic aspects of both approaches. Although

these could be elaborated on in greater detail, they are left for further study.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study has been to present a comparison of various therapeutic aspects of Buddhism and the American schools of existentialism.

SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

Buddhism is more than a religion, as it includes various fields of study. Therapeutic psychology is one integral theme of Buddhism. The founder of Buddhism was Prince Siddhattha Gotama, and his teaching is known as Buddha Dhamma. Theravāda Buddhism is the conservative school of Buddhism. Its basic principles are similar to those of other Buddhist schools. Man creates his own destiny under the law of action-reaction. The law is felt to be a key reason for individual differences, man's misfortunes, and happiness. It is also an explanation for the Buddhist concept of "rebirth." Each person is in search of the permanent state of psychological well-being. He will be reborn life after life in his striving for this attainment.

The central theme of the Buddhist theory of man is known by many names such as: "wheel of life," "chain of causation," and "interdependent origination." It is an expla-

nation of the natural process of phylogenesis through which man has evolved; of man's twelve psycho-somatic conditions which are interrelated and interdependent; and of the interrelated causes of all facets of human suffering.

Therapeutic approaches in Buddhism are based on the physical and psychological explanations of man, which are an intensive field of study. The Buddhist theory of man has been discussed in this study in a general manner. According to Buddhist philosophy, life consists of three characteristics: impermanence, suffering, and no-self. Man's physical and psychological components are divided into five groups: body, feelings and sensation, perception, drive, and consciousness.

Buddhist therapeutic approaches are divided into two major groups: the approaches for the promotion of psychological health, and the approaches for the cure of psychological disturbance. The therapeutic relationships of both groups consist of three types: man to his self, man to another man or man in a group, and man to concrete and abstract objects. Methods and techniques of both types of therapeutic processes are flexible and eclectic. Temporary and permanent states of the psychological well being of an individual are the therapeutic aims of Buddhism. The permanent goal can be achieved only through the promotion of psychological health. The discussion of Buddhist therapeutic psychology is by necessity a limited one.

Existential psychotherapy is not a system of psychotherapy but an attitude towards therapy. It is a protest

against the treatment of man as an object not as a human being of worth and complexities. The term "existential psychotherapy" in this study refers to American existential psychotherapy in general, which has adopted and modified European existential thought in philosophy, psychology, and psychiatry.

Existential therapeutic approaches are based on a theory of man which might be summarized as follows: Man's existence is prior to his essence. Each individual is unique. His uniqueness varies with time as he is in the process of emerging to become a new individual. Man is a total complex being and is different from animal, object, or machine. He is a being of worth and dignity. He lives in the world of meaning. Man shapes his own destiny; his present mode of existence is the sum of his choices, actions, and past experiences. Anxiety and guilt are inevitable in the course of human existence. Freedom is human dignity and is inseparable from responsibility. Man can make choices when he has the opportunity to be free. He actualizes himself and fulfills his inner potentialities by continual participation in a world of things and events, and always in encounters or dialogue with other men. Some qualities of being can be developed only in relation to another person. Therapy is an encounter or a dialogue in which a person is enabled to feel free, to actualize his self, to learn to bear guilt and anxiety, and to make choices.

The therapist is the most important factor in existen-

tial psychotherapy. He creates the therapeutic relationship (the encounter) and manipulates flexible, therapeutic methods and techniques. The therapeutic relationship, in turn, is the key factor of the therapeutic process. It is the means to attain the therapeutic goals. The encounter is based on various grounds such as brotherly love, human warmth, human understanding, and respect for the patient as a being of worth and dignity.

Existential psychotherapy is a new movement. It is still at its initial stage of development. However, many writers feel that this school of psychotherapy is a favorable trend and valuable for the technological, mobile society.

Buddhism and existentialism have many similarities and differences. There are many common themes in the theories of man on which the therapeutic approaches of both schools are based. These are, as examples: man is in a process of becoming a new individual, he is a complex being, and he creates his own destiny. There are many differences as well, but the Buddhist concept of "rebirth" is the major difference, and underlies all others. Similarities and differences could also be drawn out from both therapeutic approaches. Among these similarities are the emphasis on flexible, eclectic, therapeutic methods and techniques, and the focus on the here-and-now experience of a person. However, there is one distinct difference in the therapeutic approaches of both schools. Buddhist approaches place more emphasis on ways of living and thinking for preventing

psychological problems than on healing them. The existential approaches are centered on the cure of man's psychological conflicts, which are seen as the by-products of an industrialized, technological society.

DISCUSSION

Buddhism and existentialism emphasize man's suffering and his confrontation with it. This is both a frightening and a strengthening way of living one's life. Therefore, Buddhist and existential philosophies might be ineffective or damaging when applied to persons who dare not face life's reality, who cannot accept life as suffering. However, various therapeutic attitudes of these two schools could be profitable to the practitioners of other schools of psychotherapy, such as respect for the patient as a human being of worth and dignity, and belief in the need to study man in his totality.

Existential psychotherapy is still in the initial stage of development; many refinements and clarifications are required, especially in regard to the means to achieve its therapeutic goals. In comparison, the writer believes the Buddhist approaches are rather more refined, developed, and practical as to the means to achieve psychological health. These means may or may not be profitable and adaptable to the existential approach. The writer would like to propose that there should be some research studies being done to investigate the possible therapeutic results of a combination of

the practices of these two schools of psychotherapy.

The writer has a firm belief that the growth of existential psychotherapy will bring out favorable consequences in the field of psychological health. Other results might follow, such as easing the Westernization processes of the developing countries, and fulfiling the objectives of international development. Many developing countries are aware of psychological problems which emerge as the by-products of the industrialization process. The consciousness is one psychological factor that hinders their Westernization.

Both the Buddhist and existential approaches emphasize man-to-man therapeutic relationships. Unlike the existentialists, Buddhists also include man-to-his-self therapeutic relationships (e.g. self-awareness practice, meditation practice) which are regarded as effective and profitable means to prevent and to cure various psychological problems such as loneliness, anxiety, the loss of self-identity, and intolerance. The writer has the opinion that if methods of self-psychotherapy could be developed by the Western schools of psychotherapy in their unique manners, they could prevent or cure many psychological problems in the mobile, technological society, with its nuclear type of family life. However, this development is not without difficulties, as people in an industrialized society tend to be unfamiliar with self-interaction.

CONCLUSION

Having had an opportunity to study contemporary Western psychology, the writer was surprised to find many similar themes with those of Buddhism. The comparative study, therefore, has been undertaken. Amazingly, it has been discovered that though there are many commonalities in various therapeutic aspects between Buddhism and existentialism, there are many differences in therapeutic factors. Each school, therefore, is unique. The outcome of this study reminds the writer of the statement made by Jung, quoted by Humphreys (1962):

> . . . to read a little Buddhism is to realize that the Buddhists knew two thousand five hundred years ago, far more about modern problems of psychology than they have been given credit for. They studied these problems long ago and found their answers too (p. 231).

The writer leaves the responsibility of this statement to its generator, and lets the critical mind of a reader ponder upon it. In conclusion: ". . . it is the task of every profession to pass on the best of past and present thinking to the novice, that he might examine it, think about it, and build on it (Beck, 1966, p. 457)."

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